

- REGIONAL PLANNING
- RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES
- ZONING IN CANADA
- L'URBANISME EN BELGIQUE
- RECONDITIONING
- REVIEWS

# COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

VOLUME VII NUMBER 2

JUNE 1957

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# COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW

# REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

*Editor:* ERIC BEECROFT

Volume VII, Number 2.

Ottawa, June 1957

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
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Volume VII, No. 2

June

1957

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

Autorisé comme envoi postal de 2e. classe, Ministère des Postes.



"NATURE PREDOMINATES" in Tapiola, a housing district near Helsinki, Finland. Multi-storey buildings alternate with low terrace houses and "own-home" houses. Efforts are being made to create a "cross-section community" where different income groups "will live and feel happy side by side". An article on Tapiola, by Heikki Hertzen, appears in TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (London), March 1957.

LA NATURE PRÉDOMINE à Tapiola, un district de logement près de Helsinki, Finlande. Tapiola aura un centre d'affaires, administratif et culturel avec des édifices publics, des établissements pour le sport, des piscines, des parcs et de vastes terrains de stationnement. Il y a alternance entre des bâtiments à plusieurs étages, des maisons en terrasse et des maisons occupées par les propriétaires. Des efforts se font en vue de créer un quartier résidentiel où des groupes de gens, à tous les niveaux de revenus, "pourront vivre et se sentir heureux côte à côte".

The top photograph, which is by Aarne Pietinen Oy, has been received through the kindness of the Editors of FINLANDIA PICTORIAL and the FINNISH MUNICIPAL JOURNAL. The photograph at the right is reproduced from TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING.



# PUTTING REGIONAL PLANNING TO WORK

by James W. Wilson

Let's be honest about it: we have not yet come within a mile of effectively selling regional planning in Canada. It is not for any lack of earnestness on the part of the few who have tried, or because there is anything wrong with the idea. Far from it. It is rather that we have failed at three basic points, which are really unforgivable for any would-be salesman: we have not defined the need clearly; we have omitted to say exactly what our remedy is; and we have not specified how it must be used to be effective. Unforgivable.

First let me try to pinpoint our problem. Canada is a vast country, but only 7 percent of it is occupied and only 4 percent improved.\* Furthermore, all the major cities, with the exception of Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg, are located in quite limited amounts of good, developable land. In every case the urban area is a major competitor for this land and so far has been winning hands down over other kinds of development. For example, in the Greater Vancouver area, according to census figures, some of the finest soils in the Dominion have been disappearing at the rate of 4 square miles per year; in 10 years five out of six designated airport sites have been overrun; and two of our best park sites are now seriously threatened. Much as it may shock Canadians, it is not unreasonable to compare the struggle for developable land in Canada with that in Britain, which is indeed a "tight" little island in that respect. Certainly with their greater mobility and purchasing power, Canadians are a greater threat to their own country than the British to theirs.

So, in the name of free enterprise—probably the most frequently seduced term in the Canadian dictionary—we are happily hacking away at a scarce resource in a completely uninformed, irresponsible way. The bulldozer

\*J. W. Watson: *Basic Problems of Regional Planning in Canada*, COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW, Vol. IV, 1954.

## The Author

Mr. Wilson is a graduate in civil engineering from Glasgow University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and in city and regional planning from the University of North Carolina. He spent some time with the Tennessee Valley Authority studying its program and methods. Mr. Wilson is now Executive Director of the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board of British Columbia.

has been transformed from a mere machine to a symbol of the Canadian way of life. The sorcerer, it seems, is asleep and the apprentice and his broom have taken over.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING TO THE LAND

That is bad enough. But what are we doing with the land we take over? It is not only that from coast to coast we are building third-rate communities, sprawling, characterless, inefficient and far-too-costly monsters. It is also that they are surrounded by invisible rings of speculative subdivision which have already decimated the land and made further sprawl inevitable. Studies in the Vancouver area showed that in one suburban municipality in 1955 ten years' supply of building lots had already been subdivided in advance of demand. The visible community is scattered enough, but the invisible community-to-be, like the iceberg, is worse.

Thus we make the worst of both our worlds, our urban communities and their rural hinterlands, and the tragedy of the rake's progress is played yet again, as if man never learned a lesson. At a time when Canada is being held up as an example of moderation and sanity in a troubled world, we squander our wealth in a way that is an insult to our intelligence and our ability to govern ourselves and an outrage against those who follow us.

## PRESCRIPTION FOR ANARCHY

Our prescription (I do not say "cure"; that depends on co-operation by the patient) for this form of anarchy is regional planning. But what is regional planning? Yesterday it was taken to mean coordinated development of natural resources, and the Tennessee Valley Authority with its navigation-flood-control-power program was its high priest. But today in Canada—as in many areas of the United States—the problem is different and calls for a completely different concept. We need to plan for areas where *man himself is the major factor*, rather than the claims of resource development alone; that is, for the great cities and their hinterlands. Metropolitan planning is not enough. It is essential, of course, in that it treats the metropolis as one unit, which is only commonsense. But it also treats the metropolis as a sort of prima donna (with a weight problem) who is a law unto herself and must have her own way, regardless. Only regional planning can produce a marriage between vital cities and unspoiled hinterlands in which the partners, while complementing each other, maintain their own integrity and personality.

Then what would a regional plan show? First, it would outline areas for industry, general urban development and agriculture or other resource developments, including watersheds. Second, it would indicate areas for specific key needs such as major parks and beaches, airports and hospitals. And lastly it would show the communications system, principally highways and bridges, which guide development and tie the parts together. It would thus be a long-range general plan, requiring constant revision, which would act as a framework both for community planning in the region and for a number of provincial and federal department activities.

#### IS THE PROVINCE RESPONSIBLE?

Assuming that this is what regional planning is and does, another question arises, which, it seems to me, lies at the root of our confusion and lack of success. Who should be responsible for regional planning? A glance at the last paragraph shows that all levels of government are involved. But it seems to me that the provincial government has the greatest interest and responsibility. It is directly responsible for highways (most important of all) and major parks. It has considerable control over hospital and school programs. It administers crown-held forest lands and water resources. Almost the only important element which is not a direct provincial responsibility is control over the use of land in organized areas. But even that responsibility cannot be disclaimed simply because it has been delegated to municipal government. For it is quite evident that our ancient municipal structure is quite inadequate for today's urban problems. (I do not exaggerate; it is ancient by Canadian standards. In B.C. for example, it was conceived almost exactly a century ago, reached "maturity" at sixty, slumbered, like Rip van Winkle, through forty eventful years, and has now awakened to an urbanized world of bewildering complexity and speed. Alas, this is no fairy tale.)

Surely provincial governments still have a duty to see that these problems are tackled adequately? Ontario obviously thought so in creating Metropolitan Toronto. But it is quite clear that these thoughts, forward-looking as they were, were not in themselves broad enough. Lastly, in dealing with centralized federal departments, surely the provincial government has more resources and weight to throw into negotiations than the municipalities? All these considerations, among others, suggest that the onus of regional planning lies primarily with the provinces. This does not necessarily mean that they themselves should prepare regional plans, although I think that an excellent case could be made for that course while still recognizing municipal "rights". But it does mean, that, whether they prepare plans or not, they must be involved in carrying them out. In particular, a regional plan which does not allow for highways—or, perhaps, which the highways department ignores—is a hopeless, confused cripple from the start.

But whether the provincial government itself prepares development plans for its various regions or merely cooperates with separate regional planning organizations, it obviously has a major planning job to do at its own level. For surely highways, resource developments, water utilization, parks, land clearing, drainage and irrigation, conservation, public health (as in pollution control), public buildings (court houses, hospitals and, in B.C., liquor stores) can and must be made to conform to a cohesive development plan—and that plan must also embrace urban development. Surely, too, it is too much to expect this massive task of coordination to be carried out effectively by busy deputy ministers or their assistants, who are not only preoccupied with their prime responsibilities but are often and to some extent inevitably in competition with each other. And equally it is too important to leave to goodwill or general understanding.

#### WHERE DOES THE PLANNING FUNCTION BELONG?

How then can planning be made to work at the provincial level? Is a provincial planning department the answer, or is this merely a "paper" solution whose effectiveness depends on the personality of the minister and his deputy and on the department's status as evidenced by its budget? Not being a civil servant experienced in departmental in-fighting, I hesitate to pass judgment. But it does seem that, in order to be effective, the planning function should be tied closely to sources of *real* power. This suggests that either provincial planning should be part of the Premier's office, serving him directly in a staff capacity, or should be attached as a staff arm to the department of finance with the duty of scrutinizing and integrating departmental programs and estimates. It may not be as easy and simple as that. There might be difficulty, for example, in getting finance officers to think in terms of work programs rather than just money. But undoubtedly it could be done. And here I think we have much to learn from the States—Pennsylvania and Rhode Island for example—which in the last two or three years have established, or re-established, planning functions either under the Governor or in the Budget Office.

No doubt there are other ways. For example, I have heard it suggested that since the highway department is normally not only the biggest spender of all provincial departments, but has by far the most influence on the development of the province, provincial and regional planning might find an effective operating base in the highways department. It will be objected—and so far, with justice—that highway engineers have been more concerned with actual construction problems than with putting highways where they will do most social and economic good. But that approach may be changing. For example, the new *PLAN FOR ONTARIO HIGHWAYS* seems to be based on much more than engineering matters alone and will certainly act as a very potent guide not only for highways but for all kinds of development in the province. So far, however, planners have had little

success in affecting provincial highway planning, and this novel proposal suggests, in effect: "if you can't lick them, join them". Or would it be completely wrong in principle to attack the overall planning function to *any* ordinary operating department with its inevitable bias?

#### SUMMARY

In capsule form here is the situation:

(1) In the key areas in Canada containing our largest cities, we are running amok. This is due to ignorance of the situation and to obsolete ideas and forms of government.

(2) The problems involved can be tackled rationally only through regional plans, involving the cities *and* their hinterlands *and* all governmental programs influencing the development of land.

(3) To work effectively, regional planning cannot be treated as a local matter. The provincial government must cooperate and, somehow, commit itself to regional plans.

(4) This will involve finding a new role for planning in the structure and workings of the provincial government.

So far we have failed to make a case, because we

ourselves have not spoken clearly and convincingly; because most planners have been preoccupied with their own urban problems and seem to have thought no further than the metropolitan area at the most; because we have attempted to build regional planning by cooperation at the local level, overlooking the overwhelming importance of provincial activities in the development of regions.

It is fortunate that the problems and their consequences are becoming more evident, for there is no more time—or space—for failure. It is fortunate, too, that some praiseworthy achievements have already been chalked up—ironically enough in areas where the availability of land is not in itself a major problem—principally in Alberta, although even there much remains to be done to get full value from regional planning. It can be done, because it is being done.

Cities and regions are eloquent and dispassionate evidence of a people. They tell irrefutably what manner of men inhabit them. They cannot be silenced. If Canada is not to be shamed, she must bring to her building much more concern, vision and courage than she is doing now. I believe that regional planning, properly conceived, adequately staffed and courageously used, can be a potent tool towards that objective.

## RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

by Hans Blumenfeld

*Editor's Note. The REVIEW is grateful to the American Society of Planning Officials (1313 E. 60th St., Chicago) and to Mr. Blumenfeld for permission to publish this paper which was read at ASPO's National Planning Conference, March 1957.*

All planning is an amalgam of prediction and prescription. Planners, as they always emphasize, merely give advice to those who actually develop land: individuals, corporations or governments. They also advise governments to make prescriptions concerning developments by private enterprise. But it should be evident that people, acting as a community, will not accept prescriptions which do not conform to what they do, acting as individuals.

Prescription can work only in the framework of prediction; it can see to it that what is going to happen anyway will happen smoothly and efficiently.

Thus the primary concern of planners is and should be the correct *prediction* of residential densities on which all planning of facilities depends. It is not impossible to make reasonable predictions, if such factors as topography, past density trend, transportation facilities and relation to places of employment and to the city centre are correctly evaluated. The behaviour of men in the

Mr. Blumenfeld, who is now Deputy Director of the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, has had a wide experience in Europe and the United States. He has been Director of Research for the Philadelphia Housing Association; Senior Planner for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission; consultant to the Traffic and Transportation Department of Philadelphia and to the University of Pennsylvania's Institute of Urban Studies and Institute of Local and State Government.

mass shows measurable regularities on which predictions can be based. A recent analysis of the outward movement of zones of constant densities in the "inner suburban belt", 3 to 8 miles from the city centre, showed a ratio to the rate of population growth of 0.83 in the Philadelphia area, and of 0.85 in the Toronto area. More research along these lines is needed.

However, the discussion herein is concerned primarily not with prediction, but with prescription, with means to bring about the "right" residential density in urban areas. Does anybody know what the "right" density is?

I do. It is 12,000 to 60,000 persons per square mile of residential area. In other words, acceptable conditions can be created within a wide range of densities; and it depends on the location, family type, and consumer's preferences which one is appropriate in any particular case; but there are upper and lower limits beyond which serious disadvantages appear.

With poorly developed means of transportation and

the resultant excessive concentration of population, too high densities have been—and still are—the main danger which planners have tried to prevent by prescription, mainly by zoning regulations requiring minimum lot sizes, setbacks and yards, and maximum coverage and height or floor area ratio. These prescriptions are fairly effective in setting an upper limit. As economic pressure has tended to cause full utilization of the zoning "envelope", they are also reasonably close indicators for prediction.

With the development of the private automobile and of high-speed roads a very different situation has developed in the peripheral areas of our large cities and in the surrounding suburbs. If such areas are within the city limits, zoning sometimes permits relatively high densities and, in such situations, it is found that development occurs at considerably lower densities than zoning would permit. Suburban municipalities almost universally enforce low densities by zoning and subdivision controls. Planners have enthusiastically supported these "high standards" in the name of "public health and welfare" and the courts have approved this interpretation.

It is hardly a secret that municipal governments are prompted by quite different considerations to adopt these "high standards". These standards effectively keep out people with low incomes who can only pay low taxes and generally require more municipal services for education, health and welfare than their more fortunate neighbours. The "high standards" are an effective means of protecting the pocket-book of the taxpaying "ins" against any "outs" who cannot pay an equal or, preferably, higher share of taxes.

The result, which has duly been viewed with alarm by an increasing number of observers of the urban scene, is an increasing class division between the suburbs and the central city in which the lower income groups are being concentrated. This concentration has alarmed city taxpayers, their elected representatives, and the banks holding city bonds and mortgages. So they are now trying to "reverse the trend", to beat the suburbs at their own game of attracting the higher and excluding the lower income groups. Under fancy names such as "urban redevelopment" and "urban renewal", many cities in the U.S.A. are destroying low income housing and replacing it by housing for the middle or higher income groups.

Where does this leave those whom "God must love", according to Abraham Lincoln, "because he made so many of them?" As Hugh Pomeroy, the Planning Director of Westchester County, New York, remarked, "the poor are being zoned out into the Atlantic Ocean." Both the suburbs and the central cities are enlisting the planners as mercenaries in this merciless class war of the "have's" against the "have-nots."

Redevelopment has been something less than a success. But neither are the low density suburbs happy. Like other modern weapons, enforced low density burdens and endangers the bearer as much as the "enemy".

The disadvantages of excessively low density development, of 4.5 houses or less per acre of residential area, can be summarized under three headings: (A) over-extension of urbanized area, (B) isolation of daily life, and (C) difficulty in finding labour for industry and commerce.

(A) Urbanization of a very extensive area has the following inconveniences:

- (1) very large investments for roads and utilities to serve this extensive area;
- (2) very long travel distances from the inner areas to open areas;
- (3) very long travel distances from the outer areas to the commercial, civic, and cultural facilities in the centre;
- (4) an increase of daily vehicle-miles roughly equal to the square of population increase.

(B) Even more serious may be the effect on the daily lives of the residents in the newly developed residential areas. Most of those residents of such areas who work in the city centre and practically all those who work in other areas travel by car. With growing dispersal of places of work the percentage of those travelling to work by car will tend to increase.

It must be assumed that the great majority of residents will, in the future, as at present, consist of one-car families. It is, therefore, important that transit stops and neighbourhood facilities such as local shopping and community centres, schools, churches, etc., should be within walking distance of the homes, since wives and children remain without transportation facilities during the day.

Walking distance may be defined as one-quarter mile maximum, or a circular area of less than one-fifth of a square mile which, at a density of 4.5 families per acre, contains not more than 500 to 600 families. This has the following consequences:

(1) Bus service at adequate headways of 10 minutes or less can be maintained only during rush hours in the direction to and from the central city. At other hours and in other directions service can be maintained only at headways of 30 minutes or more. Even such a limited service can be maintained only if heavily subsidized by the taxpayers.

(2) A population of 500-600 families can just barely maintain a public elementary school of 8 classes (or 6 classes with a 3-level system) and kindergarten, if 80% to 90% of all children in this age group attended the public elementary school. If higher percentages go to separate schools, public schools have to be more widely spaced. Separate schools as well as junior and senior high schools are beyond normal walking distance for most of the students.

(3) A local shopping centre requires a market area of at least 1000 to 1200 families. Consequently at least half of the families in such areas live beyond normal walking distance from a local shopping centre.

## RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

(4) The same holds true for churches, clubs and other community facilities. Observations in communities which have been developed throughout at such low densities confirm that housewives lead isolated lives, restricted to contact only with their immediate neighbours, resulting in lack of participation in civic, school, church, social and cultural affairs and ultimately in a sense of frustration.

(C) Most municipalities designate extensive areas for industry and commerce and want to encourage their development. Practically all industrial and commercial enterprises require a certain percentage of low-wage earners. Many of these, notably female labour, do not have cars at their disposal. On the other hand, few workers of this type will be found in detached houses on relatively large lots. The consequences are:

(1) At best, many workers have to travel long ways, with adverse effects on morale and productivity; at worst, employers are unable to recruit a full staff.

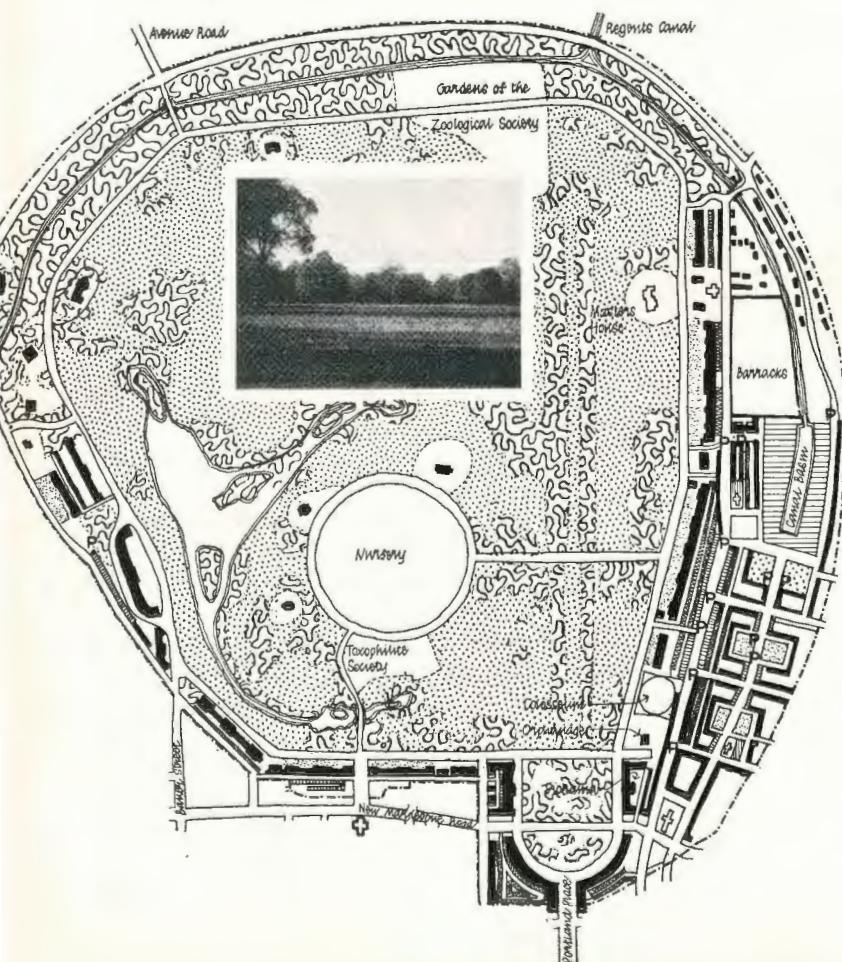
(2) In the long run the neighbouring communities cannot be expected to supply the lower-paid segment of workers but will adopt similar restrictive zoning policies. Carried to its ultimate consequence this would undermine the economic base of the entire area from which the people occupying the more expensive homes derive their income.

Thus the policy of picking the raisins out of the cake and throwing the crumb's to one's neighbours finally defeats itself. We cannot go on developing all new areas at the densities of 4.5 houses or less per acre of residential area such as now prevail in new subdivisions. There must be a floor as well as a ceiling for densities.

That is easier said than done. Under our system of private land ownership and land development, the function of municipal planning is largely negative. We can and do say "no" to the developer. We can, within limits, tell a fellow: "Thou shalt not live here." We cannot—thank God—prescribe: "Thou shalt live where I think it is good for you." The "enlightened" absolutists of the 18th century *did* make prescriptions such as: "on this street everybody must build 3 stories high over his entire frontage." I do not suggest that we follow their example.

Nor do I suggest that we tailor our residential zones so tightly to the anticipated demand that the resulting land monopoly raises land prices to a point where people are *forced* to build at higher density than they want to.

We can and should do two things: advise and encourage people to build, in suitable locations, apartments, row houses, and other types of group housing less wasteful of land than the detached house on its 60 or 80 foot lot; and remove the zoning and sub-division restrictions which now prevent this type of development.



**REGENTS PARK, London.** In COUNTER-ATTACK (reviewed on pages 103-5), Walter Manthorpe and Elizabeth Denby compare the "compact planning" of Regents Park with the "sprawl" of a new housing estate: Oxhey. Their statistics (page 426 of COUNTER-ATTACK) show that "Regents Park provides nearly as many rooms as Oxhey on one-third of the residential area. The result is that the land left over provides London's biggest and best public open space; and the housing — half of it, alas, now demolished — made up the most coherent urban landscape in London."

[Symbol: dotted area]	Amnesty open space
[Symbol: vertical lines]	Allotments
[Symbol: horizontal lines]	Planting
[Symbol: dashed lines]	School sites
[Symbol: wavy lines]	Mens and garages
[Symbol: horizontal lines with dots]	Shops
[Symbol: cross]	Pub
[Symbol: cross with dots]	Communal (not Public)
[Symbol: cross with horizontal lines]	Church
[Symbol: horizontal lines]	Industry

Scale: approx. 1:1500



# ZONING IN CANADA

## Are We Moving Toward a Development Permit System?

by E. A. Levin

Zoning in its simplest terms is a legal and administrative device whereby a municipality divides its territory into a number of districts and applies to each district a number of regulations to control the use of land, the height and bulk of buildings and the area of ground built upon.

The first comprehensive zoning plan, embodying these three basic types of control, was adopted by New York City in 1916. Since then, the practice of zoning has spread throughout the North American continent and has become established as a normal municipal function.

In Canada, the municipality's power to zone is derived from a provincial enabling act. In nearly all of the provinces, that act is the Provincial Planning Act. All of the municipality's powers are derived in one way or another from Provincial legislation. The British North America Act of 1867 created the two-tier system of government and, in paragraph 8 of section 92, gave to the Provincial Legislature authority over municipal institutions. On the basis of this authority, each Province has passed a Municipal Act providing for the setting up of Municipal Governments and prescribing their duties and functions. Among other functions, the Municipalities are authorized to protect health, safety, convenience, morals and the general well-being of the community, and to control the use of private property for any of these ends. It is this right to control the use of private property for the public good which is the legal basis of zoning control. The specific authorization to pass zoning by-laws is provided in the Provincial Planning Acts, except in Quebec, where it is derived from the *Municipal Code* and the *Cities and Towns Act*. In Ontario, both the *Municipal Act* and the *Planning Act* enable municipalities to make zoning by-laws.

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### The Author

Mr. Levin graduated in architecture from the University of Manitoba and did post-graduate work at the School of Planning and Research for Regional Development, London, England and at the University of British Columbia. He has worked in architectural and planning offices in both England and Canada and is now with the Architectural and Planning Division of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Not all communities have exercised their right to make zoning by-laws. On the other hand, many communities have adopted very complex by-laws with extensive regulations. It might be appropriate at this point to ask why municipalities practise zoning.

### EARLY ZONING BY-LAWS

In the early years, the control of public nuisance was probably an important purpose. The individual, of course, could always, and still can, obtain relief from a nuisance through resort to injunction, where the nuisance is actionable under the common law. The zoning by-law, in its early nuisance-preventing aspect, was intended to prevent certain types of nuisance from arising, and was directed at public rather than private nuisance. Whatever may have been the nuisance-preventing intentions of early zoning by-laws, their significance has now disappeared, and the enabling legislation of none of the Provinces even mentions nuisance-prevention as one of the purposes of zoning by-laws.

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### Le Zonage au Canada

#### Sommaire français de l'article par M. Levin

Le thème principal de l'article de M. Levin est que le zonage doit être conçu désormais comme un instrument d'aménagement.

Il fait remarquer que nous avons suivi, très inutilement, la tradition américaine. Pour des raisons constitutionnelles, la législation américaine est sujette à révision par la cour et comprend un bon nombre de complications d'ordre technique. Les règlements américains sont très spécifiques et détaillés; et, puisque leur but principal est de protéger la valeur des propriétés résidentielles, ils sont négatifs et restrictifs. Leur utilité comme moyen d'exécuter un plan directeur n'est pas pleinement reconnue.

Les Canadiens ont de la chance de pouvoir légiférer librement en vue de diriger d'une façon flexible et plus directe l'aménagement urbain. M. Levin décrit le système du "development permit" qui en ce moment est au stade d'essai dans des municipalités de Terre-Neuve ainsi qu'à Vancouver et Edmonton.

### WHY IS ZONING PRACTISED TODAY?

The preservation of property values is still widely accepted as one of the main purposes of zoning. The National Research Council in 1939 prepared a model zoning by-law, accompanied by the following statement: "Zoning regulations have a two-fold function in any community—first, the provision of adequate lighting, ventilation, and general amenity of living conditions in any building; second, the general control of occupancies in any area so as to eliminate undue depreciation of any structure brought about by undesirable adjoining occupancies, thus preserving the investment of the owner and the taxable value of the property."

It has been argued that the preservation of property values as such is not a proper function of zoning but is achieved more appropriately through covenants or similar devices. There can be little doubt, however, that values may be preserved as the result of the operation of proper zoning regulations which exclude harmful uses, ensure adequate light and air to buildings, and provide open space.

Other purposes of zoning, which are recited in many by-laws across the country, include such a variety of things as to control the architectural design of buildings, to protect "amenity", to limit the density of population, to promote health and welfare, to reduce traffic congestion and so on.

It appears, therefore, that there are many specific purposes for zoning. I personally find none of these very satisfactory explanations of why communities practice zoning control. In the first place, none of these purposes is comprehensive enough to serve as an adequate definition; and in the second place most of them represent not purposes, but rather methods for achieving more fundamental objectives. For example, the limiting of building heights and the regulation of front and side yards are not really purposes in themselves but are devices for achieving a social objective desired by the town council.

### A VITAL INSTRUMENT OF PLANNING

I suggest to you that there is really only one purpose behind zoning. It is a two-fold purpose, having both a preservative and a creative aspect. On the one hand, zoning seeks to *preserve* those elements in the physical environment which the community finds desirable, where they exist; and on the other hand zoning seeks to *create* those elements in the physical environment which the community finds desirable, where they do not exist. All other specific purposes derive from these, and it is the choice of what is considered desirable that accounts for the differences in zoning practice between one community and another.

Defined in this way, the basic purposes of zoning are very closely identified with the purposes of physical planning, which is as it should be, because zoning today is becoming a vital instrument in the planning process.

In those communities which practise planning as a proper municipal function, the purpose of zoning is to ensure that all development which takes place does so in accordance with the provisions and intentions of the official Municipal Plan.

When we come to examine the elements of the physical environment which communities find socially desirable and worth preserving or creating through the instrument of zoning legislation, we are really examining all the land-use elements which go into the making of a plan. Even in those municipalities which do not practise planning, the zoning by-law constitutes a kind of rudimentary land-use plan.

### ADVANTAGES OF SEGREGATING LAND USES

What then are these elements of the physical environment which communities think are worth preserving or creating? These, of course, will vary from place to place and from time to time. But even with a fairly wide range of variation there are a number of environmental features which all zoning by-laws and community plans recognize as socially desirable. Perhaps the most common of all, both in the past and today, is the segregation or grouping of similar uses in specific areas, so that physically the community is divided into a number of districts or zones of homogeneous function, character and appearance.

Some of the advantages of land-use segregation are:

- (1) *increased efficiency*, resulting from the maximum economic use of the land—for example, offices and banks are grouped together, and interdependent industries are located in the same district, all to their mutual advantage;
- (2) *the maintenance of property values*, by excluding certain uses from areas where they would be harmful—slaughterhouses, for example, cannot locate beside office buildings;
- (3) *greater safety*—for example, heavy industrial traffic does not have to enter residential areas and should not do so;
- (4) *improved appearance*, since it is easier to attain architectural harmony in an area of similar land uses than in an area of uncontrolled uses;
- (5) *the relief of congestion* and the control of the population load on the land, each district being regulated in terms of building size relative to site, and in terms of occupancy.

Other qualities which are generally considered desirable are adequate light and air for every building, streets free from traffic congestion, amenity in the form of landscaping, pleasant vistas, "character" or individuality of a place or a neighbourhood, absence of noise or disturbance. Some communities desire beautiful buildings as an element in their physical environment to such an extent that panels of experts are set up to pass judgment on the aesthetic aspects of proposed developments, and some communities feel that a moderate size is so desirable that

they attempt to set a limit to their growth by surrounding themselves with a green-belt zone. The list is indeed very long. Each community attempts to preserve such of these elements as it already possesses, and to create those which it does not have, and it does so through the instrument of the zoning by-law.

#### HOW DOES A ZONING BY-LAW WORK?

A zoning by-law is simply an act passed by the council of a municipality to implement the various purposes which we have been discussing. It usually contains at least three parts: one part consisting of definitions of terms which are used in the regulations; another part devoted to definition of powers of the officials or bodies who are charged with administering the by-law, and of procedures under the by-law, as for example in the case of appeals; and a third part consisting of a series of schedules setting out the uses which are permitted, and the regulations governing those uses, in the various zones or districts into which the municipality has been divided. A zoning map is an integral part of the by-law. The map shows the districts themselves, each one coloured with its appropriate notation. There are three basic types of use—residential, commercial and industrial—although many zoning by-laws create additional types, and there are generally a number of districts for each type. For example, the residential use usually has at least three different districts—a single-family dwelling district, a two-family dwelling district and a multiple-family dwelling district; often there are more. Similarly with the commercial and industrial uses. The number of zones or districts will depend on how fine a segregation of uses it is decided to achieve. The schedule of each district sets out specifically the uses which are permitted in that district. Uses which are not named are not permitted. This is recognized as the best current practice, although it is still not uncommon to find schedules listing uses which are *not* permitted. The schedules also contain the regulations governing the height of buildings, front, side and rear yard requirements, and any other items which the council may choose to include. Higher uses are generally permitted in the lower districts. For example, apartment blocks are not permitted in single-family dwelling districts, but single-family dwellings are permitted in multiple-family dwelling districts. Industries are not permitted in residential areas, but residences are often permitted in industrial districts. A variety of uses is permitted in every district. For example, the single-family dwelling district is probably the most restrictive district of all; but even here permitted uses usually include churches, hospitals, clubs and community centres, schools, parks and so on. It is considered bad practice to limit any district to just one permitted use—such a practice would be considered unnecessarily restrictive. Similar districts must permit similar uses. If two different areas of a city are designated as the same kind of zone, then one of these areas cannot

prohibit uses which are permitted in the other. If it is desired to vary the uses from one to the other, even in the least degree, then the two districts should have different designations.

Good zoning practice requires that the by-law regulations be reasonable and not discriminatory. Although the by-law is intended for the public good, it is generally accepted that no individual shall suffer undue hardship for the public good, and to ensure this, there are sometimes powers of relaxation of regulations given to the by-law administrators, and there is always the right of appeal.

Appeals arising out of the by-law are heard before a Board of Appeal, which may deal with such matters as are specifically prescribed in the by-law. Usually an appeal lies in the case of undue hardship; an error on the part of a municipal officer; or an exception or a relaxation of a regulation allowed in the by-law. In dealing with cases of unnecessary hardship, or of relaxation of regulation, the Board may vary the literal requirements of a regulation where an alternative method will achieve the same results without impairing the original intent of the regulation, and at the same time grant relief to the appellant. Amendments or revisions of the zoning by-law and map are the responsibility of Council and generally require the approval of the Provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs.

The zoning by-law is administered by the planning commission, or by a department of the Municipal Government—the Public Works or Engineering Department, or by the Administrative Section of the Planning Department where one exists.

The implementation of the zoning by-law is effected at present through the issue of a building permit. If a proposed use violates the by-law, a building permit is not issued. If the applicant feels that he has been unjustly dealt with, and in fact has grounds for an appeal, he can bring his case before the zoning Board of Appeal, where it is judged within the context of the by-law, as already pointed out.

#### LIMITATIONS OF PRESENT ZONING TECHNIQUES

That, very briefly, is an account of the purposes of zoning, and of the nature of zoning by-laws and zoning practice. I should like now to examine one or two aspects of current zoning techniques which in my opinion seriously limit the effectiveness of zoning as a planning instrument.

All of these limitations are due in one way or another to the fact that the traditional form of the zoning by-law makes it too cumbersome and inelastic to perform its new role in the planning function. The zoning by-law, as we have it today, is the product of a number of historical circumstances. Firstly, there was, until very recent times, very little planning done. It is probably safe to say that

municipal planning on the scale and in the form that we know it in Canada today is not yet ten years old. Zoning has been practised in North America for forty years. During that period there was no need for flexibility in the zoning instrument. On the contrary, rigidity was more than just an advantage; it was inevitable. It was inevitable for two reasons. First, because the scope and form of zoning legislation was determined in the law courts of the United States; and secondly, because zoning legislation, divorced from planning concepts, sought to achieve three basic principles which are summarized as follows in a paper on residential zoning by Frank Horack, Jr.\*

(1) Residential land use, though of lesser economic value, represents the highest social and community value and must therefore be protected against all uses injurious to its full and complete enjoyment.

(2) The protection of these values must be achieved by confining uses of greater intensity to specific and limited zones.

(3) Within zones, and particularly within residential zones, the protection of one property owner from the unreasonable use of another's land can best be achieved by specific height, bulk and area restrictions.

The combination of these circumstances—the absence of a dynamic concept of planning, the preoccupation with the safeguarding of residential uses, and the limitations and particularity imposed by American constitutional law—produced a powerful, closely articulated and rigid instrument.

### UNNECESSARY DEPENDENCE ON AMERICAN PRACTICE

Here in Canada, the principles underlying our zoning by-laws, the form which the by-law takes, and even the draftsmanship of the regulations, borrow heavily from American practice. This is unfortunate, and in a sense paradoxical, because Canadian zoning by-laws rest on a different legal basis from those in the United States. Canadian zoning powers rest ultimately in English common law, whereas in the United States they are derived from the State Constitution. Municipal zoning regulations have therefore been examined by the courts in the light of State Constitutions for the last forty years. As a result, there is a weighty and exceedingly complex body of jurisprudence on the subject.

American regulations have a high degree of particularity, especially in the itemizing of uses which are permitted or restricted in any district, and in the limitation of discretionary powers in interpretation and administration of the regulations. The by-law is therefore a very inflexible instrument.

In Canada, we have followed the American example in this respect, although there is no constitutional basis for such preciseness and particularity. Americans themselves are beginning to realize the dangers inherent in the inflexibility of current techniques. There is a considerable

amount of interest emerging in the United States in the idea of "performance standards" as applied to zoning. Today's zoning by-laws are what are termed "specification standards". That is, the regulations specify precisely what uses are permitted, and what standards of floor area, plot coverage, height, set-backs, et cetera must be observed. Specification standards permit one, and only one, method of compliance.

### PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR ZONING

The idea of performance standards would be to permit any compliance consistent with the objectives of the code. The notion was first presented in the U.S.A. by Mr. Dennis O'Harrow who developed the thesis in connection with industrial zoning in 1951 in a paper entitled *Performance Standards in Industrial Zoning*.\* Mr. Horack subsequently published the paper already mentioned, in which he applied the principle to residential zoning. Both of these papers argued that each land use should be tested by its direct and indirect effect on adjacent land use, on governmental services, and on community growth, and that industry, business and homes could be located in any zone so long as the intended use met adequate performance standards. Eleven tests were suggested—smoke, odour, dust and dirt, noxious gases, glare, heat, noise, fire, wastes, aesthetic and psychological effects.

I do not think the eleven tests suggested are nearly enough. For example, there is no mention made of vehicular traffic congestion and hazard, nor of population load on land, nor of overshadowing, nor of obstruction of air, light and vista, all of which are caused by the use of buildings or land; and the list can be extended. The idea has a great deal of merit, but the difficulty of course lies in devising adequate standards and the means of measuring the performance of any use in relation to that standard. For example, sound can be measured by instruments, but the level at which sound becomes objectionable is surely a subjective thing; and furthermore, in applying the sound test, where is the measuring device to be located? At the source of the sound, or at the ear of the adjacent land user, or the remote land user, or somewhere halfway between? Obviously there are a tremendous number of difficulties to be overcome, and I think it will be some time before they are reduced to the point where "performance standards" can be used as a satisfactory basis for land use control. They should be followed with interest, however, as a means of overcoming the serious difficulties inherent in current zoning practice.

\*Mr. O'Harrow's paper was issued in pamphlet form by the National Industrial Zoning Committee, 820 Huntington Bank Building, Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Horack's *Performance Standards in Residential Zoning* was published, along with other papers on Performance Standards, in *PLANNING* 1952 (Amer. Soc. of Planning Officials, 1313 E. 60th St., Chicago, Ill.).

### SOME FAMILIAR EXAMPLES OF ZONING FAILURES

These difficulties, as I have already suggested, lie in the inelasticity of our regulations which limit the usefulness of zoning. Perhaps an example or two will make my meaning clearer. I mentioned earlier that it is accepted practice that higher uses are permitted in lower zones as a right. Residences are allowed to locate in commercial zones, and even in industrial zones, although the reverse is not true. I know of an instance—and this must be multiplied many times across the country—where an area has been zoned commercial, and about ten per cent of it is actually in commercial use. About eighty per cent, however, is in residential use. The area is in fact well located for commercial use, but the residential occupancy destroys the continuity of store fronts, and makes suitable lots scarce. Residential uses should not have been permitted, or else, given greater discretionary powers, that is, more flexible regulations, the by-law administrator could have controlled the residential uses in such a way as to provide a well-planned solution.

The rigidity of the specification standards also tends to reduce street design to a dull common denominator. An example that readily comes to mind is the false-front appearance of almost any main shopping street in Canada. The pattern for our shopping streets was undoubtedly set in the days of the horse and carriage, when every shopkeeper felt it imperative that his shop front faced onto and was immediately accessible from the street, so that his establishment was advertised to the passing carriage trade. It was inevitable then that stores should line both sides of a vehicular way. Zoning by-laws reinforced this tendency. Invariably they required no front or side yards in the business districts, so that stores were built right up to the property lines. Tall buildings as well as lower ones were constructed, but because it was impossible to know how tall a building would go up on the adjacent lot, the side walls of most buildings were left blank and windowless, in anticipation of being covered at some future date by an adjacent building. Where this anticipated building was not erected, or was lower than expected, the blank sides of the taller building were left exposed in their common brick or concrete facing, which in most cases were used for large advertisements. Advertisements, of course, are appropriate to business districts, but this fortuitous provision of display space only emphasizes the way in which zoning by-laws can contribute to the breakdown of street design.

Another instance can be found in our residential areas. Front and side yard regulations are primarily concerned with the provision of light and air, and perhaps fire safety, sound insulation and privacy for dwellings. But the minimum standard becomes the norm, and results in street after street of houses set mechanically on their lots, each precisely the same distance from the front lot line, and from each other in rows of unbroken monotony.

The prohibition of any type of dwelling other than the detached house in single-family dwelling districts not only prevents the possibility of interest, variety and visual relief through the siting of terraces and apartments in relation to detached dwellings, but also tends to create the socially undesirable situation of residential areas composed of families all more or less in the same income group and with the same background.

### EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON PLANNING, NOT RESTRICTION

If one analyzes the defects and limitations which we have been discussing, it will be found that almost all of them are the result of the inability of current zoning practice to give adequate development control to the municipal planning authority. In the first place, applications for building permits are usually processed by the building department rather than the planning department. It is only those applications about which there is some doubt that are referred to the planning department. All applications which satisfy the zoning regulations are automatically issued with a building permit, without scrutiny from the planning point of view. This practice has a regrettable disadvantage. Zoning regulations cannot guarantee good development. No regulation can ensure excellence. It can only prevent the very worst. Current zoning techniques cannot, and do not, prevent mediocre, and even bad development. But, what is worse, they do not provide the opportunity for rectifying the bad features of a project, and improving the design, before it is erected. The effectiveness of zoning as a planning instrument would be immensely improved if the municipal planning authority had the power to prevent the issuance of a building permit if the project would not contribute to the sound development of the area. The purpose behind this would be not to deny the permit (although in the final extremity this might be necessary), but rather to provide the basis for discussion between the applicant and the planning department with the object of improving the quality of the scheme.

There are of course some legal difficulties in using such a procedure. A by-law cannot give complete discretionary power to the administrator. It must at least set out the grounds upon which the approval of a project could be withheld, and the administrator would have to be certain that he was on the right ground before exercising such discretionary power as the regulations vested in him.

### THE "DEVELOPMENT PERMIT" SYSTEM

This kind of arrangement is in fact beginning to appear in various places in Canada in the form of the "development permit" system of zoning control. In my opinion, it represents the next step in the evolution of public control of land use. In general terms, it is a system in which the traditional restrictive concept of zoning for land use and building use is replaced by the

positive concept of "development". This positive concept may be found in the *Town and Country Planning Act, 1947* of Great Britain. Development is there defined as an operation in, on, over or under the land, and usually includes the erection of buildings, engineering operations, and the change of use of land. The system requires that anyone wishing to undertake development must apply to the planning department for a development permit, and no building permit shall be issued unless and until a development permit has been issued.

The authority for municipalities to issue development permits is already provided in the Planning Act of Newfoundland. The system has also been introduced in Vancouver and Edmonton. I believe that the zoning by-law for Oromocto in New Brunswick provides for development permits, and such a scheme is being considered for several towns in the North West Territories. The development permit represents the first real departure from the powerful influence of American practice which has shaped Canadian zoning concepts from the beginning.

Development permits may be impossible in the United States. I do not expect that in Canada they will have an easy passage. The idea is quite new in its application in this country and there are many legal questions which it raises. It is likely that before long some injured property owner, having been refused a development permit, will seek an order of mandamus. Eventually a number of cases may be tried and decisions handed down, and I think the system will take its place as an accepted method of development control.

#### PLANNING AND ZONING MUST BE INTEGRATED

The concept of zoning has changed through the years. What started out as a simple restriction of certain uses of land has now come to be looked upon as a key technique in the implementation of municipal plans. As the practice of planning becomes more widespread, so zoning control is being correspondingly widely used as a means of securing the overall land use provisions of the master plan or the official plan. Indeed it is probably the only device available at present for the day-to-day implementation of the land use provisions of a plan. A plan, how-

ever, is not a static thing. The concept of planning itself has changed. What used to be thought of as a fixed, immutable and authoritative blueprint of all future development in the municipality is now looked upon as a dynamic, constantly evolving *process*. It is obvious then that zoning control, in the degree that it is rigid and inflexible, is unsuitable to the current conception of planning. The difficulty and the delay in securing revisions and amendments to the zoning by-law and map accordingly reduces the usefulness of zoning as a planning device. And indeed, the limited discretion which most zoning by-laws give to the administrator in itself limits the usefulness of zoning as a planning tool. On the other hand, it is argued that any element of flexibility in the administration of the by-law involves a danger that the integrity of the by-law could be undermined by the pressure of vested interests. It is also argued that any element of discretion introduces the hazard of arbitrariness in the administration of the by-law. And finally it is argued that if the zoning by-law is the land-use control instrument of an operative municipal plan, then easy and frequent amendments to the by-law, and arbitrariness in its administration would soon render the plan itself meaningless.

There is some truth in all of these arguments. But I believe that their validity hinges upon the degree to which the planning and zoning functions of the municipality are integrated. In the worst extreme, where the municipal plan is prepared by a consultant, and the zoning by-law is administered by a board or commission, then all of these dangers are very real. At the other extreme, where the plan is prepared and constantly scrutinized by the municipal planning department which also has prepared and administers the zoning by-law subject to appeal, then the dangers are minimized.

Certainly, in the latter case, the advantages of a by-law which is flexible, allows a reasonable amount of discretion to the planning director in the interpretation of its regulations, can be amended by Council without too much procedural involvement, and safeguards individual rights through adequate appeal provisions, would far outweigh whatever risks these qualities might involve.

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## RÉGLEMENTATION PROVISOIRE DE L'AMÉNAGEMENT URBAIN

par H. N. Lash

Quand une administration municipale se lance dans un programme d'aménagement à longue échéance, si elle procède de la manière traditionnelle, elle aura à faire face à une période pénible et souvent prolongée durant laquelle la municipalité se développera au petit bonheur sans attendre qu'on en dresse les plans. En effet, il arrive souvent que l'expansion urbaine progresse au même rythme que l'élaboration du programme de développement, mais non en conformité de ce programme. L'urbaniste ne réussit jamais à prendre les devants sur le constructeur et se voit par le fait même incapable de mettre ses plans à exécution.

Même s'il y avait accord, il reste toujours un danger. Un nouveau règlement de zonage soumis à un conseil municipal, peut-être après des années d'études et de révisions pour le tenir à point, est un document qui fait réfléchir. Il se peut qu'il comporte beaucoup d'exigences nouvelles, jamais mises à l'épreuve dans la localité. Des propriétaires peuvent s'alarmer, de même que des constructeurs ou entrepreneurs éventuels; aux séances publiques, il peut y avoir un tel déploiement de protestations et de demandes que le conseil municipal est amené à renvoyer la mesure aux calendes grecques. Ceux qui croient avoir des droits acquis triomphent, tandis que l'urbaniste est mis à pied.

Parfois, cependant, le plan est toléré avec ou sans protestation. Mais même dans ce cas, le meilleur plan va rencontrer beaucoup de difficultés. Un règlement de zonage général, soudainement transformé d'un exercice théorique à un document pratique, court la chance de laisser entrevoir des portes de sortie imprévues, des subtilités et des complications, du moment que la théorie rencontre le défi de la réalité. Un règlement tout frais est ordinairement soumis à une kyrielle d'amendements, de rapiéçages, de changements presqu'au lendemain de son adoption. Il ne faut donc pas être surpris si chaque

changement s'accompagne d'arguments, de frustrations, de confusion, sans parler de tous les tracas et de tous les délais qu'exige l'adoption de ces amendements.

Nous prétendons avoir trouvé, en Alberta, le moyen de remédier à ces inconvénients durant la période provisoire de préparation des plans. L'idée n'est pas de nous, mais nous l'avons mise à l'épreuve sous diverses formes dans nombre de municipalités de population inégale et à problèmes différents et nous avons constaté qu'elle s'avérait pratique. Bien plus, on accepte publiquement, sans en questionner la validité, ce mode de contrôle dans l'aménagement.

Voici en quels termes la loi d'Alberta indique la réglementation provisoire de l'aménagement urbain: "La réglementation s'exerce à l'égard de l'aménagement dans les limites de la municipalité . . . d'après le bien-fondé de chaque permis demandé en vue de travaux d'expansion et compte tenu du fait que le projet est conforme au programme d'ensemble en voie de préparation."

On a là, en somme, l'idée apparemment bien simple qu'ont énoncée MM. Bland et Spence-Sales dans leur rapport présenté à Edmonton, en 1949, à propos des exigences requises en vue d'une administration compétente dans l'aménagement de cette ville. Ce régime a tout d'abord été appliqué à Edmonton. Les membres de notre Association ont amplement été mis au courant de ce qui s'est fait dans cette ville.<sup>1</sup> Cependant, on ne sait généralement pas que la même idée a été appliquée, avec quelques variantes, mais avec autant de succès, à Calgary et dans plusieurs petites villes et municipalités rurales de la province. On applique même ce programme dans trois

<sup>1</sup>*Interim Development*, par Brahm Wiesman (REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME, vol. III, no. 1, mai 1953) et *Edmonton . . . Since 1950*, par Noel Dant (vol. IV, 1954).

## RÉGLEMENTATION PROVISOIRE DE L'AMÉNAGEMENT URBAIN

régions en friche qui n'ont pas d'administrateurs municipaux élus et cette réglementation permet également d'orienter l'aménagement du nouveau centre pétrolier de Drayton-Valley.

Bien qu'il s'agisse d'une idée facile à concevoir, la mise à exécution de la réglementation elle-même se révèle plus compliquée. La municipalité reçoit du ministre l'autorité nécessaire pour appliquer la réglementation en vertu d'une ordonnance ministérielle comportant les pouvoirs à exercer et les méthodes à suivre. L'ordonnance entre en vigueur en vertu d'un règlement qu'adopte la municipalité et qui suspend automatiquement l'application de tout règlement de zonage déjà en vigueur.

Dorénavant, toute personne voulant construire ou occuper des terrains ou des bâtisses à d'autres fins que celles prévues ou intensifier leur utilisation, doit obtenir un permis à cette fin. Le fonctionnaire chargé par le conseil municipal d'étudier les demandes d'aménagement, ou parfois une Commission d'aménagement provisoire instituée par le Conseil, s'occupe des demandes de permis qui sont accordées ou refusées selon les prévisions du plan d'ensemble et du nouveau règlement de zonage. Si la décision ne lui convient pas, le requérant peut en appeler tout d'abord à une Commission municipale d'appel et ensuite à la Commission consultative d'aménagement provinciale.<sup>2</sup> Mais, outre le droit que possède le requérant d'en appeler d'une décision, toute personne qu'intéresse le permis accordé a aussi le droit et, dans certains cas, peut même s'adresser à la Commission consultative provinciale pour s'opposer à la décision des autorités municipales d'accorder le permis concerné.

D'autres complications se présentent pour les autorités municipales. Il faut maintenir un dossier des demandes reçues, des décisions rendues et des appels formulés. Il faut s'occuper des avis à envoyer aux opposants et afficher les détails relatifs aux lotissements où des travaux sont projetés. On doit dresser des cartes indiquant les travaux d'aménagement autorisés et préparer un ensemble de règles et règlements d'application générale inspirés des décisions prises dans chaque cas particulier.

Il est évident que le contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement urbain diffère tout à fait de celui qui s'exerce par le zonage même. De fait, ce contrôle provisoire s'organise sur la base de procédures administratives, alors que le zonage repose sur une série de règlements et de secteurs d'occupation bien déterminés. En effet, avec un zonage bien établi, le constructeur sait parfaitement ce qu'il peut construire, où et comment il peut construire; mais, avec le contrôle provisoire, il sait uniquement qu'il lui faudra obtenir un permis et que parfois, ce qui est de nature à le réconforter quelque peu, il lui sera parfaitement loisible d'en appeler de la décision des autorités, si le permis lui est refusé.

<sup>2</sup>Ce droit d'appel à la Province a été supprimé substantiellement par la législation de 1957.

Dans la pratique, cependant, ce qui peut ou ne peut pas être fait dans chaque cas est bien plus précis que pourrait le laisser supposer ce simple aperçu. En même temps qu'elles adoptent un règlement pour contrôler provisoirement l'aménagement urbain, la plupart des municipalités établissent des directives qui servent de guide pour l'occupation du sol. Dans d'autres cas, on ébauche une carte schématique des zones d'occupation et on l'accompagne de directives constituant ainsi un *Guide provisoire relatif au zonage*. Quant à la forme, ces cartes et directives sont analogues aux plans et règlements officiels de zonage, mais on ne les applique pas de la même façon. La municipalité n'est pas tenue de délivrer un permis, même si les travaux d'aménagement proposés paraissent conformes aux dispositions du *Guide*. Elle peut profiter de cette demande pour modifier ses cartes et règlements, y ajouter au besoin, et ensuite refuser la demande. Par contre, si elle trouve que le projet soumis présente des avantages, tout en constatant qu'il ne répond pas aux exigences du *Guide*, la municipalité peut utiliser la même procédure pour accorder le permis demandé. La plupart de ces modifications peuvent se faire dans l'espace de quelques jours, au grand bénéfice des promoteurs.

Le contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement urbain comporte de nombreux avantages. Il permet de résoudre facilement la première difficulté à laquelle donnent lieu les règlements de zonage, soit leur entrée en vigueur sans délai. Etant donné qu'il n'est pas nécessaire de fixer les zones d'occupation et de préciser les règlements dans l'ordonnance ministérielle, il suffit de donner des directives sur la méthode à suivre et les exigences à respecter et de s'assurer que les rouages municipaux sont en mesure de prendre soin d'un grand nombre de demandes de permis. On est alors prêt à exercer le contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement urbain. La région de Drayton-Valley, pour fins administratives, relevait directement du ministre (c'était un avantage). Dans ce cas, la besogne préparatoire s'est effectuée dans moins d'une semaine et peu de temps après, une fois tenues les audiences publiques requises, la réglementation elle-même s'appliquait. D'autres municipalités ont procédé avec presque autant de célérité.

Il y a plus important encore! En effet, on peut adopter au fur et à mesure, et cela pendant une période assez longue, de nouvelles données relatives au zonage. On n'est pas obligé d'abandonner tout d'un coup les exigences que comporte un règlement devenu désuet pour recourir à un nouveau règlement tout à fait différent et on évite ainsi des réactions fâcheuses chez les administrés. Même si, dans l'entre-temps, discussions et controverses se donnent libre cours, le nouveau règlement de zonage, une fois prêt, entre en vigueur facilement et tout naturellement et la population s'aperçoit qu'il ne contient rien de plus que ce à quoi elle a été habituée depuis des années.

Le plus important de tout, c'est que le contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement fait entrer l'urbanisme dans le domaine de la réalité et oblige à tenir compte, sous le coup des nécessités quotidiennes, des complications auxquelles

donne lieu l'expansion urbaine. On peut facilement connaître, grâce au mécanisme d'appel, ce que pense le public des modifications proposées et des nouveaux règlements de zonage, vu que, dans chaque cas, on lui soumet une proposition bien précise, une demande d'aménagement bien réelle que l'on peut discuter, plutôt que des généralités sur des éventualités plus ou moins plausibles. Les constructeurs constatent également que le programme d'urbanisme peut se bâtir au rythme de l'accroissement accéléré de la ville et de l'introduction de méthodes nouvelles de construction. Ils ne sont plus contraints de laisser passer la brève saison de construction en attendant que se mette en branle le mécanisme qui modifiera les règlements de zonage.

Bien que la réglementation provisoire ait tout d'abord eu pour objet de résoudre les problèmes qui se présentaient durant la période de transition, elle a aussi apporté des avantages imprévus. Elle s'est révélée le meilleur moyen d'amener le public à participer à l'élaboration des programmes d'aménagement et de s'assurer que les programmes répondaient aussi bien aux besoins de la population qu'à ceux des autorités municipales. En effet, dans l'examen des demandes d'aménagement, le point de vue des deux parties en cause, celui de l'urbaniste et celui des citoyens, a l'occasion de se faire valoir. Les décisions prises donnent graduellement une forme concrète au programme d'urbanisme.

En Alberta, les avantages qu'a tirés l'urbanisme du contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement urbain sont réels et précieux. Il eut été à peu près impossible sans cela d'appliquer avec succès les règles de l'urbanisme dans les deux principales villes de la province, étant donné leur croissance très rapide au cours de la dernière décennie. Toutefois, il ne faut pas oublier que les méthodes utilisées comportent certains inconvénients. Tout d'abord, il ne s'agit pas d'un rouage administratif aussi simple qu'un

règlement de zonage, bien qu'il soit plus souple. A eux seuls, les deux organismes d'appel exigent l'accumulation de beaucoup de documents. Le service d'urbanisme d'une ville de moyenne importance requerra du personnel additionnel pour s'occuper des demandes. Il peut s'avérer que le personnel chargé de l'aménagement ait à s'occuper de tellement de détails administratifs qu'il soit incapable de procéder aux recherches fondamentales et à la préparation du programme d'urbanisme. Les centres plus petits et les municipalités rurales ont rarement le personnel suffisant, même dans le domaine clérical, pour suivre la procédure comme il convient. De plus, ces municipalités ont constamment besoin des conseils d'un urbaniste professionnel, pour que les demandes soient étudiées en fonction des critères de l'urbanisme. Autrement, on peut perdre de vue le programme préparé et ne rester qu'avec un régime de réglementations arbitraires. Enfin, il se peut que les autorités municipales soient tentées de s'en tenir indéfiniment au contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement et à perpétuer cette période de transition. Elles peuvent trouver cela plus facile que de se mettre réellement à l'oeuvre et d'adopter un programme déterminé. Par contre, d'aucuns sont d'avis, étant donné les résultats de l'expérience tentée dans la province, que le système de réglementation provisoire devrait être le seul utilisé, parce que l'autorité publique et l'entreprise privée ont déjà depuis trop longtemps subi les mauvais effets des pouvoirs traditionnels à la base des règlements de zonage.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'Alberta continue l'expérience qu'elle a initiée dans le domaine du contrôle provisoire de l'aménagement urbain; elle l'applique encore dans divers centres et avec de nombreuses variantes. Le public a très bien accueilli cette expérience, ce qui a permis d'aménager de façon méthodique et réaliste nombre de villes de cette province à une époque où le zonage traditionnel eut été impuissant à le faire.

Canadian readers will be interested in learning of the importance attached in Belgium to comprehensive physical planning and to the representation of professional and citizen groups in the central planning authorities.

*Les lecteurs canadiens seront sans aucun doute fortement intéressés à connaître l'importance qu'on attache en Belgique à l'urbanisme intégré et à la représentation des corps professionnels et des associations de citoyens au sein des organismes centraux d'urbanisme.*

## L'URBANISME EN BELGIQUE:

### I. Organisation centrale

par J. J. Dumont

Assurer le meilleur aménagement territorial dans le cadre d'une société déterminée, tel doit être le but de l'urbanisme et de la législation s'y rapportant. Il s'agit de protéger la vie familiale et la santé de l'homme, de lui permettre de satisfaire ses besoins sociaux et culturels, d'améliorer le rendement économique du pays et d'assurer à la municipalité et à la région des possibilités d'organisation matérielle et de développement, de sauvegarder l'esthétique des cités et des sites.

En Belgique, le problème a un caractère d'urgence et de gravité particulières eu égard à l'extraordinaire densité de la population, à l'exiguïté du territoire, aux caractères particuliers de son économie, aux nécessités d'orientation nouvelle à donner à certains secteurs de sa production industrielle, au problème du logement, aux destructions dues à la guerre, à la dénatalité régnant dans certaines régions et à tant d'autres questions pour la solution desquelles il est clair que l'urbanisme peut et doit apporter sa contribution.

Les dispositions légales qui régissent actuellement en Belgique l'aménagement des municipalités et régions sont contenues dans un recueil de textes légaux relatifs à l'urbanisation du Royaume. La majorité de ces règlements furent créés et mis en vigueur après la libération du territoire belge, soit à la fin de 1944.

L'administration générale de l'urbanisme relève du ministère des travaux publics, et a sous ses ordres neuf directions provinciales, soit une par province, et chacune des municipalités comprises dans le territoire d'une province est responsable vis-à-vis de la direction provinciale de toutes les études et travaux se rapportant à l'urbanisme.

L'administration générale de l'urbanisme est chargée, sous l'autorité du ministre des travaux publics:

- (1) de l'application de la législation organique de l'urbanisme;
- (2) des attributions dévolues à l'administration de la voirie communale en ce qui concerne:

### L'Auteur

*M. J. J. Dumont, Lic. S.H., Pr. H., professeur d'horticulture et architecte-paysagiste, fit un stage de deux ans au Ministère de la Reconstruction en Belgique. Plus tard, il séjourna au Congo belge où, pendant six ans, il s'adonna à la création de plantations avec cités indigènes. Il est actuellement au service de la Ville de Montréal en qualité de surveillant-adjoint au Service des Parcs.*

- (a) l'application des dispositions de la loi communale relatives aux plans d'alignement, à la délivrance des alignements particuliers et des approbations de plans de bâties, et aux règlements de police sur les bâties;
- (b) l'application de la loi sur la police de la voirie;
- (c) l'application de la loi organique sur les chemins vicinaux, sauf en ce qui concerne les travaux de voirie à exécuter à ces chemins;
- (d) l'application des lois sur l'expropriation pour cause d'utilité publique.

(3) de l'allocation des subsides à octroyer en application des dispositions légales visées ci-dessus, hormis les subsides pour les travaux à exécuter aux bâtiments et à la voirie.

### CONSEIL TECHNIQUE DE L'URBANISME

De façon à rendre plus efficace le travail de l'administration générale de l'urbanisme, il fut créé près cette administration un conseil technique de l'urbanisme à caractère consultatif dont la mission consiste:

- (1) à faire toutes suggestions sur l'établissement d'une doctrine urbanistique à appliquer dans tout le pays;
- (2) à indiquer les principes généraux selon lesquels doivent être élaborés, au point de vue technique, les plans d'aménagement prévus par la législation sur l'urbanisation;
- (3) à procéder à l'élaboration d'un règlement-type sur la bâtie.

Les membres de ce conseil sont au nombre de cinq.

### CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DE L'URBANISME

Un conseil supérieur de l'urbanisme a pour mission:

- (1) d'émettre un avis sur toute matière relevant de l'urbanisme soumise à son attention par le ministre des travaux publics;

(2) de procéder spontanément à des études sur toute question d'urbanisme et d'en adresser les conclusions au ministre des travaux publics.

Ce conseil est composé

(1) des représentants des Ministres qui ont dans leurs attributions: les travaux publics; les affaires économiques; l'agriculture; les communications; les finances; l'instruction publique; l'intérieur; la santé publique et la famille; la coordination économique et le rééquipement; la reconstruction; et

(2) un délégué de chacun des organismes suivants: société nationale des chemins de fer belges; société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux; société nationale des habitations à bon marché; société nationale de la petite propriété terrière; commission royale des monuments et des sites; union des villes et communes de Belgique.

(3) Ces délégués sont présentés à l'agrération du ministre des travaux publics par les organismes intéressés: un délégué de chacun des établissements d'enseignement supérieur d'urbanisme ci-dessous: l'institut supérieur d'urbanisme appliquée (I.S.U.A.); l'institut supérieur d'urbanisme annexé à l'école nationale supérieure d'agriculture et des arts décoratifs de Bruxelles (E.N.S.A.); l'école d'architecture et d'urbanisme annexée à l'académie royale des Beaux-Arts d'Anvers; l'institut d'urbanisme de l'université libre de Bruxelles (U.L.B.).

(4) Ces délégués sont présentés à l'agrération du ministre des travaux publics par les établissements intéressés: un délégué de chacune des associations suivantes: union belge des géomètres experts immobiliers (U.B.G.); fédération des associations belges d'ingénieurs (F.A.B.I.).

(5) Le ministre des travaux publics choisit des délégués sur une liste double qui lui est soumise par ces associations: quatre délégués de la fédération royale des sociétés d'architectes de Belgique.

(6) Le ministre des travaux publics choisit ces délégués sur une liste triple qui lui est soumise par cette fédération: deux délégués de chacune des organisations les plus représentatives d'employeurs et de travailleurs; et deux délégués de la ligue des familles nombreuses.

(7) Ces délégués seront présentés à l'agrération du ministre des travaux publics par les organisations intéressées: 14 personnes choisies par le ministre des travaux publics parmi celles dont l'expérience peut aider le conseil dans sa tâche.

(8) Le directeur général de l'administration de l'urbanisme, le directeur général de l'administration des voies hydrauliques et le directeur général de l'administration des routes. Ces fonctionnaires sont membres de droit avec voix délibérative.

Le mandat de membre du conseil général de l'urbanisme a une durée de cinq ans, et la présidence est exercée

par le ministre des travaux publics ou son délégué. De plus, le mandat des membres du conseil supérieur de l'urbanisme est gratuit. Toutefois, les membres de ce collège bénéficient, pour leurs déplacements et frais de séjour, des frais de route et de séjour prévus par les règlements en vigueur.

#### English Summary of M. Dumont's Article on Planning in Belgium: I. Central Organization

*The extraordinary density of Belgium's population, the very small size of its land area, the special nature of its economy, the need to give new direction to certain sectors of its industrial production, the problem of housing and the devastation of war—such circumstances as these give a particularly urgent character to planning.*

*Most of the legislation relating to planning in Belgium has been put into effect since the liberation of the country at the end of 1944. General responsibility for urban planning rests with the Minister of Public Works and, under his supervision, planning directorates in the nine provinces; and each municipality is responsible to the provincial directorate for all studies and works relating to urban planning. The general administration has wide authority in the application of laws relating to the planning of the highway network and the expropriation of property for public use.*

*This general planning administration is assisted by a five-member technical planning council having the following duties:*

- (1) *to make suggestions on planning policy to apply throughout the country;*
- (2) *to formulate, from the technical viewpoint, the general principles by which urban planning programs established by law can be carried out;*
- (3) *to prepare a model building code.*

*A superior planning council has the following objects:* (1) *to formulate policy on any urban planning matter submitted to it by the Minister of Public Works;* (2) *to undertake on its own initiative the study of any question of urban planning and to submit its findings to the Minister of Public Works.*

*This Council is composed of (1) representatives of most of the Ministries; (2) delegates of several national associations (e.g., those concerned with railways, housing, municipal affairs, historic sites and monuments); (3) representatives of professional schools and institutes (architecture, town planning, decorative arts); (4) representatives of organizations of surveyors and engineers; (5) four representatives of The Federation of Architectural Societies of Belgium; (6) two delegates from each of the most representative organizations of employers and labour and two delegates of The League of Large Families; (7) fourteen persons chosen by the Minister from those whose experience can aid the Council in its work; and (8) the Director General of the Planning Administration, the Director General of the Waterways Administration and the Director General of the Highways Administration.*

*The Council meets under the Presidency of the Minister or his delegate.*

*This eloquent article by Charles Pelletier in L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE was inspired by the Quebec Number of our REVIEW. But our English-speaking members will recognize it as a rousing commentary on the sad state of urban development in almost every province of Canada and almost every state in the United States. It is also a challenge to legislators and officials everywhere to give leadership to public opinion in defining the objectives and methods of urban development. We are grateful to L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE and to Mr. Pelletier for permission to publish this translation.*

## OUR PROVINCE IS GROWING UGLY

(A Translation)

by Charles Pelletier

The COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW has just published a special issue on the Province of Quebec. The situation described therein affords no ground for complacency.

It is evident that the articles, drawings and photos in that issue were not intended to dwell upon the charm of *la belle province*. They were apparently intended to warn Quebec opinion, to draw attention to the factors which tend to depreciate our aesthetic heritage by impeding the orderly and harmonious development of our cities and villages. Will this objective be reached? Let us hope so, since the very clear conclusion drawn from this formidable document is that our Province is growing ugly and that this ugliness increases as rapidly as our economic growth, which is saying a great deal.

Not that this growth is in itself a disaster. Our mistake has been that, beforehand, we have not taken the proper measures for it by planning in accordance with its physical and social implications. We have been taken by surprise and hustled by events. Disorder already prevailed when we finally became aware of the problem.

In the past fifteen years, not one Province has been urbanized as rapidly as ours. In 1941, Quebec had 41 municipalities with a population of 5,000 or more; 10 years later this number had increased to 74; in 1954 it had reached 91. Along with an enormous increase in population in the Montreal region, particularly on the south shore, we have seen the extremely rapid growth of the medium-sized cities. When cities can no longer be enlarged due to the lack of space, their suburbs then undergo a vigorous expansion. Between the 1951 and 1956 census, urban regions such as Sherbrooke, Three Rivers and Chicoutimi-Jonquière have seen their population increase at a rate of 11, 12 and 15 per cent.

Villages, as they expand, undergo a rapid change in character as new industries are set up; or they find themselves enclosed within the limits of a large metropolis.

In either case, their function and physical aspects are greatly modified. New buildings, in a style foreign to local traditions, destroy the village's unity and harmony. Architectural factors which make up its beauty are quickly submerged by the proliferation of commercial establishments and blatant signs.

Our roads are also becoming ugly. A boulevard, not more than a few years old and situated in quite an exceptional district, has now become, as Jean Cimon points out in his article *Le Cancer Urbain*, a plain "street-passage resembling a circus in distress where we drive at 30 miles an hour or less between two walls of commercial signs and where loud motel billboards obstruct the view and endanger road safety." Mr. Cimon also points out that for more than one-third of the distance covered, 158 miles, from the intersection of Boulevard St-Sacrement in Quebec to the extremity of Montreal Island, highway No. 2 crosses urban centres where the speed limit is 30 miles an hour and even 20 in some cases. Having no rational community planning, cities and villages tend to expand along main highways, the real purpose and function of which is then compromised.

Under our present legislation, community planning is left almost entirely to local governments. Towns which try to plan, therefore, are still the exception. Only one-third of our cities with a population of 10,000 or more have master plans. In smaller cities, the proportion is only 20 per cent. Our individualism, our narrow outlook and the fragmentation of our territory into an infinite number of small municipalities does not facilitate the conception and application of community planning on a sufficiently wide level. Even in those areas where such plans exist, poor results are obtained, as shown by the photograph in the REVIEW showing the new silhouette of Quebec City.

Our Province is undergoing urbanization at an astonishing speed without effective control over its growth. All is done haphazardly, improvised to the liking of speculators and private interests. This lack of foresight leads fatally to the depreciation not only of the public heritage but of private property also. The cost of repairing the damage done will be much higher than it would have been to prevent it. For example, let us look at the cost of extending public utilities in a community which has been developed at random and by individual initiative!

To those who advocate more effective legislation or the creation of agencies to direct the planning of our territory on a three-level—provincial, regional and municipal—basis, it is said that public opinion is not yet ready and that it is impossible to make compulsory a state of mind and that our actual laws are not sufficiently understood and enforced. There is truth in all this. It is also true that the greatest possible measure of autonomy must be left in the hands of municipal authorities who want to carry out their duties fully. But, where local initiative fails, mustn't the State compensate? Must we expect from

the general public the effort of synthesis, the enlightened direction which will clarify this state of confusion?

Time presses, since, as we are told by leading economists, our growth will continue at the same speed in the next quarter century. A dynamic policy of community planning is not incompatible with local autonomy and private initiative. Even if the public has so far been unable to formulate and impose such a policy, it would be wrong to conclude that it does not see its necessity and that it is not ready to accept it. It must be assumed that the people are deeply anxious about an economic growth which upsets their living standards and social habits. There is nothing they would like more than to understand clearly and to support the policy of those whom they trust. But, if we continue to expect everything from the general public, this urban confusion, which is justly called urban cancer, will continue to spread. Our material progress, which in *Nouvelle-France* could be the occasion for an extraordinary expansion, will have resulted only in the loss of character—the depersonalization—of our Province and the sapping of its vital strength.

## SMALL SCALE ACTION — LARGE SCALE ACTIVITY

### Reconditioning in City Renewal

by H. P. Daniel van Ginkel

The recent publications and discussions on urban renewal in this country have been primarily concerned with large scale projects in the central area of a metropolis. The issue in Toronto and Montreal is low rental housing—in both cases a matter of redevelopment. Without judging the merits of either project, they are both ambitious, and of an order that must scare smaller communities, in considering a solution to their own smaller problems. It should be remembered, however, that Canada is experiencing a period of unprecedented growth; with a little over 100 communities of a population of 10,000 and over now, there will be over 200 such com-

munities 20 years hence. Since there is a strong tendency to the depreciation of older houses when rapid city extension occurs, there is great danger of increasing slum formation in the next 20 years.

Though there is now a greater general interest in the physical environment in which we live than there has been in the past, most communities still struggle with the inheritance of civic lassitude and consequently ugly living conditions. Vast areas of land have been squandered in the building of housing developments that, if not sub-standard now, will be so in the near future. Urban renewal is therefore a problem to every growing community in Canada right now. And it is a problem that must be faced and solved first of all in the minds of the planners.

The Toronto SHORT STATEMENT on Urban Renewal<sup>1</sup> reveals an excellent comprehensive approach to the problem. It is to be hoped that the Toronto public will give this study the support which it deserves. But it is also to be hoped that it will be followed by equally competent studies of other Canadian communities, particularly those

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<sup>1</sup>URBAN RENEWAL, A STUDY OF THE CITY OF TORONTO, 1956, SHORT STATEMENT. Published by Community Planning Association of Canada, Ottawa.

of somewhat smaller size. The study stresses the need for a general plan, as the basis for a renewal program. One might go further and say that without a general plan of the community, it is not possible to decide which areas are in need of renewal; and it is clearly impossible to set up priorities, or to decide what should be done in each particular case, without reference to the whole.

The main emphasis of the Toronto study is on urban redevelopment, although it does include some proposals for rehabilitation at a smaller scale. Urban renewal may be achieved, not only by redevelopment, but also by rehabilitation and reconditioning. Rehabilitation includes a wide range of preventive and curative measures, both physical and social. Reconditioning involves a small scale of action over a large area of activity—with physical ends which can be readily achieved. It is reconditioning, as a tool of renewal, which is the primary topic of this article.

Both rehabilitation and reconditioning have received less attention in this country than has redevelopment. Yet urban reconditioning, particularly, seems almost more important than redevelopment, since it not only affects slum areas but has a more widespread effect on the whole community. As a means of urban renewal, its potential has hardly been recognized in Canadian cities, although it has been employed successfully abroad. The smaller scale of action in a reconditioning program brings many unexploited possibilities into play.

As the moral background of redevelopment might be the universal right to a decent habitat, everyone also has a right to live in a decent imaginative environment. This leads to the root of the problem. Residential slums have their origin in a variety of causes. It may be poor sanitation, overcrowding, substandard construction, mixed land use, or a combination of these causes. Wherever the cause is other than poor construction, it is possible to cure the disease of the area, be it only on a temporary basis, and bring it back into a civilized city environment. The environment is the cause of deterioration; and curing the environment will cure blight and prevent slums.

The real problem for the planner and for municipal authorities is to keep our cities up to date. This is a first condition for any healthy economic growth. Where architecture is a conception in form, planning is a conception in space and time. The whole urban pattern will have to be considered and the whole urban environment will have to be reconditioned. This reconditioning can be a vital impulse for both central and peripheral areas.

Healthy as the growth of a community may be, it always upsets the existing urban pattern. The use of buildings in central areas changes; then buildings themselves are replaced; residential areas become commercial areas; new extensions are created to fulfil the needs of new families and of families moving out of the centre city. It was not until after the last world war that the danger of this trend was fully realized. The strongest European example of this is the city of London. After office hours,

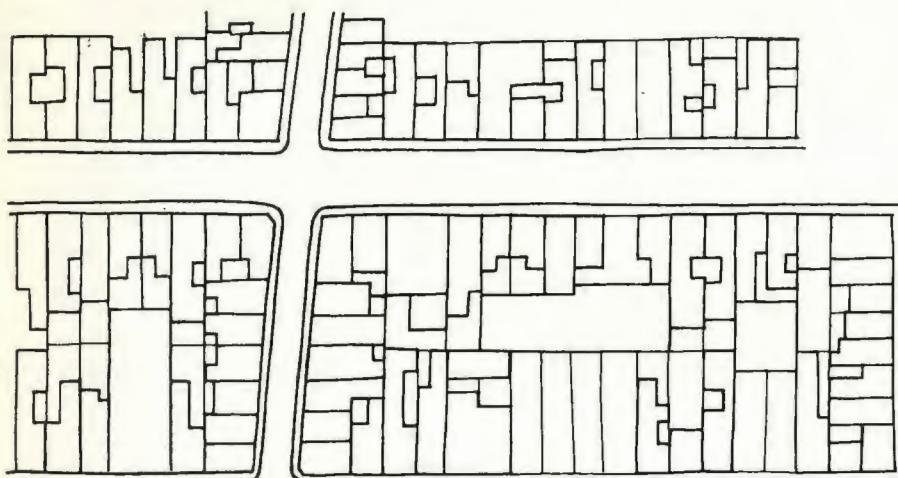
the heart of London is completely dead; the only people living in the area are the caretakers of office buildings. In many cities, the cause of slums was in the fact that houses in commercial areas were not converted to or replaced by commercial buildings, and, the area being unattractive for residences, the value of the houses depreciated. This set in motion a vicious circle of lower rental and insufficient maintenance, ending rapidly in slum conditions. European countries recognized these facts after the war, and several municipalities worked toward solution of the problems.

In Stockholm, there were several blocks of 19th Century apartment houses which were in very bad condition; the courtyards were filled with small outhouses and an accumulation of debris. Since the area was declining to slum level very rapidly, the owners decided to clear everything from the interior of the blocks and to recondition the houses. The interior block space was transformed into a common garden and a playground for children. As a result the municipality agreed to repave the streets, recondition the playgrounds and plant new trees. This combined action of owners and municipality transformed the area into one of the most attractive downtown residential areas in Stockholm.

In Copenhagen there is another example. A group of new high quality apartment buildings was built in downtown Copenhagen, adjacent to a slum area. The owners of the new building started reconditioning a small part of the slum area in order to safeguard their own investment against depreciation; this stimulated activity among the slum property owners who, in collaboration with the municipality, reconditioned the area, with playgrounds, little parks and well-paved streets. Since then, there has been further building improvement by private initiative and there is reason to believe that the whole area will be renewed in the course of time without any major public expenditure.

As long ago as 1933, the *Charte d'Athènes* appealed for strict zoning of our cities. Since then, zoning has become a common practice in most major cities, though its great potential as a tool for civic improvement has been frequently overlooked; its use has tended to be only restrictive and inhibiting. Zoning does not necessarily mean a complete separation of the functions of the city. A segregation of functions is in itself deadening to any life structure. Secondary functions should be allowed, indeed encouraged, in certain areas, though this necessitates a much more detailed and carefully regulated type of zoning than is customary. Zoning in this sense can become a positive tool for renewal, rather than the negative instrument that it is today.

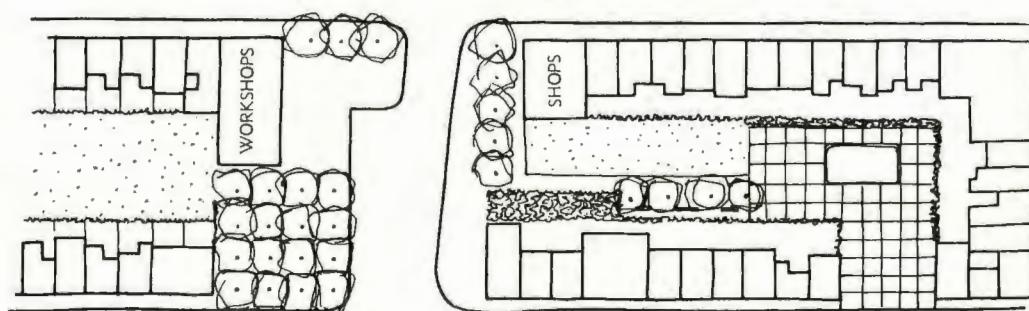
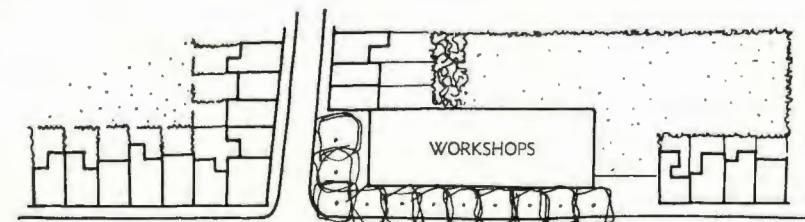
An interesting example occurred some years ago in Amsterdam, when it was necessary to prepare a renewal plan for a substandard area in the old city. The original city plan of 1612 incorporated this area. But, contrary to the rest of the plan, this relatively minor portion, of



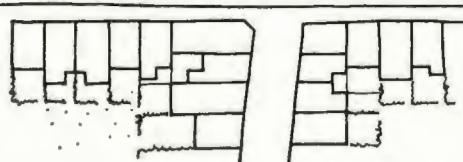
Hypothetical Illustration of  
AMSTERDAM RECONDITIONING

"a small scale of action over a large scale  
of activity"

BEFORE



AFTER



some 120 blocks, was designed on a substandard basis. Construction of the area was started around 1650 and completed by the end of the 18th Century. The houses are all baroque, built for a prosperous working class. The date of origin and class of ownership account for the fact that most of these houses were built with semi-basement workshops. Around the turn of the century the area fell into decay; this coupled with the effects of the last war made urgent the need for a renewal plan. In the course of the consequent renewal study, it was discovered that there were still many small workshops in the area, but that the small industries which occupied them seldom seemed to stay longer than 5 years. Intrigued by this fact, the inhabitants since 1930 were traced and their subsequent activity investigated. It was discovered that many of these tiny industries had developed into quite sizable ones. Since rents in the area were very low, they favoured the development of these small enterprises, which, as soon as they could afford it, moved into larger quarters outside the area. Apparently the substandard condition of the area made it an incubator for new industries. The planners therefore decided that wholesale redevelopment would not be the answer—this apart from the historic value of the area and its important location in the city.

The solution was found in a reconditioning of the district while preserving as much as possible of its socio-economic structure. Small industries were allowed in the major part, although any obnoxious industries were forbidden. Wherever possible, through traffic was eliminated by creating dead-end streets. In blocks where the majority

of houses were in bad condition, the blocks were homologated, so that the area could be used for small parks, playgrounds, and car parking. Since the substandard blocks were very narrow, one side of a block was sometimes homologated in order to give the remaining houses more space or to provide a wide boulevard.

Detailed plans were made for every block. These plans regulated the maximum height of buildings, front and rear set-backs, land use and building occupancy. The land use regulations enforced clearing of backyards; sometimes this was done on a co-operative basis, creating a common garden. Similar experience elsewhere in the city has proved that combined public and private action of this kind can produce successful results and stimulate improved maintenance of buildings and property.

These and other similar projects for rehabilitation and reconditioning are long term projects and are not as spectacular as Regent Park or the Dozois Plan; but their total impact on the life of the city is just as great, and the public cost is less. They do however demand a high level of co-operation between the municipality, owners, and civic organizations.

A town is always in transition; this is the essence of urban life. To keep alive economically, a town will be ever changing. The consequences of growth are of urgent concern to the smaller Canadian cities that can expect to increase in size at an unprecedented rate in the next 25 years. For this reason, it is in the interest of both individual and municipality to co-operate in the steady reconditioning of the city to provide for the enduring and changing needs of man.

## The Planning Principle

*Dispersal is to be achieved by planning a pattern of satellite towns about the regional centre so distributed as to ensure a measure of safety and so sited as to ensure the best use of land.*

*Each satellite town should have from twenty to forty thousand inhabitants. It should be self-sufficient: it should be designed to achieve a high standard of urban environment. Each satellite town should be separated from its neighbour and from the regional centre by fifteen to twenty miles and the intervening land should form green belts.*

*Separate industrial aggregates devoted solely to industrial purposes should be placed within the green belts*

*Excerpt from A Guide to Urban Dispersal, reviewed on the page opposite.*

*at convenient travelling distances from nearby urban units.*

*The regional centre should not have more than 200,000 inhabitants. In the course of time overcrowding and congestion are to be reduced and its function is to change to the administrative, cultural and business focus of the urban region as a whole.*

*The cluster of satellite towns and the regional centre should be related. Communications and other common facilities should be designed comprehensively. Surrounding land should be put to intensive uses that will ensure the sustenance of urban population.*

## REVIEWS

## A Guide to Urban Dispersal

**A Guide to Urban Dispersal.** A report to the Defence Research Board, Ottawa, by the Committee on Physical Planning, McGill University, Montreal, October 1956.

When it became clear that the aeroplane was more than a piece of "flying artillery", astute critics like Lewis Mumford predicted that the high-explosive bomb would spell the doom of the large metropolitan centres. Megalopolis became Necropolis, and this was taken to heart in Europe before 1939. As a result, Britain in the age of the hydrogen bomb is pursuing a dispersal policy which originated in the days of "conventional" weapons.

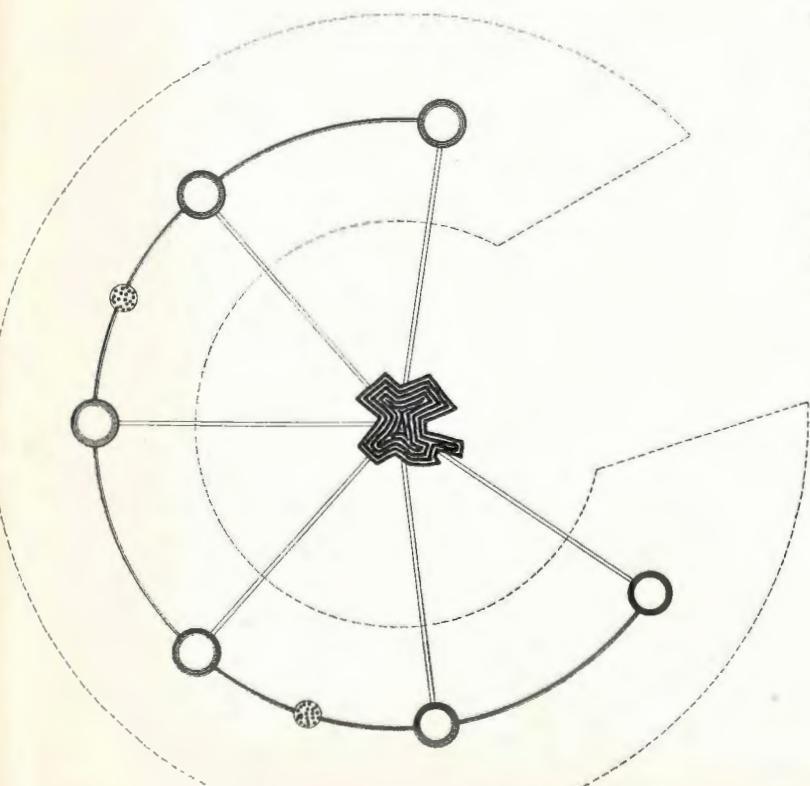
When the symbol of the mushroom cloud was accepted as a picture of the new war, military critics were quick to see that ultimately the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile would combine all the horrors of the military aircraft and the nuclear weapons. The I.C.B.M. brings the threat of almost total destruction to most large urban targets regardless of their former relative safety. With this weapon only a few years away, the Federal Civil Defence Headquarters, assisted by the Defence Research Board, called upon Professor H. Spence-Sales and the McGill University Committee on Physical Planning to carry out a study which would be helpful in determining the broad policy for future urban development. The intention was to assist large Canadian cities to assume by dispersal an urban form which would afford the optimum relative immunity, but it was recognized that the four largest Canadian cities (Montreal, Toronto,

Vancouver, and Winnipeg<sup>2</sup>) have already outgrown the major possibilities of the dispersal concept.

The publication embodying the findings of this research is called *A GUIDE TO URBAN DISPERSAL*. Originally this document was restricted (in both numbers and secrecy), but subsequently the security classification was changed. Nevertheless it will still be difficult for most agencies to obtain a copy, except on loan from Civil Defence libraries and similar places.

It can be seen that the publication inevitably becomes an essay in the development and application of the satellite theory, as the basic policy is one of dispersal rather than concentration. This is, of course, part of the current official defence policy based on strong military considerations. Planners, however, while admitting the clarity of this document, may well have searching doubts about the relevance of this theoretical argument to the specific socio-economic structure and trends in many urban centres. It would be interesting to know whether the Committee was able, under its terms of reference, to make particular case studies of the other major Canadian cities to test the validity of the hypothesis. The hypothetical example which is used throughout the book bears a fleeting resemblance to London, but as the solution is meant to apply to a municipality of 250,000 people, certain liberties were taken with the functional pattern of the centre and the physical characteristics of the region. As the introduction states, "the basis for planning is partly real and partly conjectural". Perhaps this is true of real as well as hypothetical cities, and perhaps this is the root of the difficulty.

Can it be that, as in many real cities, the peculiar dogmatics of a Howard or a Saarinen make up the conjectural part of planning? This study is certainly an imaginative solution, but it is open to the criticism that it leads other unimaginative real cities into temptation—the temptations of beginning with the answer (a satellite structure suitably related to a new communications network) and then producing the survey necessary to justify the policy. Somewhere, some unconvinced planner who also has studied military matters will argue for intense concentration in our metropolitan areas, combined with a greenbelt policy, on the grounds that a missile might miss, and that given reasonable odds on that chance, the Manhattan-like centre might be very safe, as the thermals or updraft from such an area would tend to deflect radioactive fall-out . . . on to the rest of the region which is at lower densities. But planners are, in this age, polemical and sceptical, and perhaps so many have God-like assurance that their disagreements will affect no one and change nothing.



## DIAGRAMMATIC PATTERN OF DISPERSAL

BLACK CENTRAL SHAPE — *regional centre*.

BROKEN LINE — *dispersal area*.

CIRCLES — *satellites*.

DOTTED CIRCLES — *industrial aggregates*.

DOUBLE LINES — *radial routes*.

TRIPLE LINES — *orbital route*.

It is a weakness of our current legislation and practice that most Canadian cities are still "planning without a plan" in the sense that while they grapple with day-to-day problems they have no clear policy statement on the form which they hope to take in 25 years, or even 10 years. If this study serves to reinforce all the other sound arguments for "advance planning" this will be valuable. (Time is, however, very short for such proposals or even for partial redevelopment.) The text, with many illustrative maps, is set out in 2 parts. The first deals with

- (a) the circumstances,
- (b) land and its characteristics,
- (c) the regional centre and its form.

The second deals with

- (d) the elements of the plan,
- (e) the framework,
- (f) the outline plan.

The conclusion is an outline of the responsibilities of government.

The description of the survey and the process of preparing a plan (aside from the satellite or dispersal principle) is indeed, as the authors hoped, simple and clear and to this extent valuable. The emphasis throughout on regional surveys of a metropolitan area and its hinterland, to include an area of homogeneity is sound, and this applies also to the attempt to assess land potentialities and the implications of resources, which is essential for regional development programs. What a pity, too, that planners do not always take notice of the section entitled "relevance of the survey"!

There are, in the minds of many planners, some doubts about the validity of the satellite solution as such. Social and economic forces in many centres (including most of the core areas in metropolitan regions) are in fact producing low-density peripheral growth, with intensive concentration at the heart of the Central Business District. In certain other areas (e.g. in the gap between Toronto and Hamilton), the same forces may be producing a linear type of urban-growth. This is another favourite theoretical archetype of planners and has considerable merit in transport efficiency, e.g., in the movement of goods and materials *along* the industrial or commercial "strips", and a contrasting flow of people *across* the "strips" to open space and recreational or conservation areas, or in the opposite direction to the industrial or commercial areas. There is also the typical *radial* metropolitan growth (e.g., the form taken by Toronto before the Don Mills development was built between the northern and eastern "arms" of the metropolis). Such growth, like Corbusier's "Ville Tentaculaire", is favoured by railways and expressways in centres with an extensive hinterland.

Therefore, despite the ideals set out in this publication, the functional structure of each metropolitan complex is probably unique. What is often lacking is an adequate regional survey of the type recommended by the report, and most technical readers will probably have the uneasy feeling that the synthesis for any given region might (from aspects other than the military) produce contrary conclusions because a variety of forms are present and implicit in future development. The explanation of the *Planning Principle* is good, for this principle; but many planners would challenge its general validity and therefore its status as a principle.

The approach, in the section *Elements of the Plan*, is certainly interesting if one accepts the feasibility of this basic concept and the value of a hypothetical example. If, however, the basic premise of dispersal would in fact seriously hamper the efficiency of the urban area as a living and working place, then this too would come under criticism. We simply do not know, but experience suggests that a rapid transit system would be essential as well as a motorway and railway network. One doubts from the present turmoils of Los Angeles or Detroit whether it is possible to operate dispersed cities at double their present size mainly using the automobile. As with the other recommendations of the study, this involves a great many intricate policy decisions.

The study has tremendously significant political implications, which are explained with disarming simplicity in the last section. If we assume that (as in other countries) there are sound social, economic and aesthetic arguments for a dispersal policy, in addition to the military arguments, then we find that such a policy would almost amount to a national revolution. Immediately it is apparent that vigorous Provincial direction and initiative would be needed to implement such a policy, and that its practical application over a 25-year period would involve startling changes in our concepts of land-use and the rights of ownership, as well as compensation and betterment provisions. It immediately raises as well all the present difficulties of municipal boundaries, functions and tax and assessment powers, which hamper adequate regional planning. The unit areas involved in such development policies would extend beyond even the biggest of our diminutive "regional" planning authorities. Furthermore, one senses the implied criticism that a Provincial Outline Plan would be almost essential as a policy for development of these large regions, and as a framework for metropolitan area schemes. This alone is a call for statesmanship, vision, and technical work of a very high order.

But as if this were not enough, even a cursory study reveals that there may well be a need for direct action with vigour and determination, if any results are to be achieved. If this dispersal policy is essential for national survival, and if military considerations are important enough to over-rule other arguments, the difficulties of the policy of "encouragement" (with the implication that no frontal assault or even out-flanking of the political difficulties is envisaged, but only a spasmodic guerrilla campaign) are immense. The advantages of maintaining our present ways must then be weighed, in the light of such needs, against all the social implications of the stronger course. It must be noted that even where political conditions are favourable, as in Britain, the dispersal policy initiated in 1938 for a totally different sort of war is only in recent years bearing fruit, and it may well be bitter fruit for the military planners because (in that area) the only remaining valid arguments are the social, economic, and aesthetic ones.

Behind all this, the very process of urbanization which underlies all these dispersal programs seems to involve so much of our national life that Federal policies on planning would appear to be essential (e.g.: involving measures of control over resources, land-use, industrial location); but as these are now for the most part un-constitutional, the planner must conclude that an attempt to develop this dispersal

policy might precipitate the biggest national crisis since the days of Confederation. It would certainly be strange if the pressures of defence, not the arguments of the aesthetes, the social workers, the landscape designers or the economists and statisticians, led to this change in our national life, and ended the days of "planning without a plan".

HAMILTON

NORMAN PEARSON

*Mr. Pearson, a graduate of the University of Durham's Department of Town and Country Planning, is Director of Planning for the Hamilton-Wentworth Planning Board. He is the author of Catastrophe, Civil Defence and Community Planning (COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW, Vol. V, No. 2 (June 1955)).*

## A Visual A B C and Case Book of Planning

**Counter-Attack.** The Architectural Press, London, 1957. 78 pages, 12½ in. by 9¾ in., illustrated 12s. 6d.

When the ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW published Ian Nairn's **Outrage**, it was widely accused of being merely condemnatory with no attempt made to be constructive. This criticism has now been met, if not to everybody's satisfaction, by the publication of **Counter-Attack**.

Along with Mr. Nairn's own work in this sequel are four special contributions: *Trees*, by Peter Shepheard; *Afforestation v. Landscape*, by Geoffrey S. Kelly; *The Machinery of Sprawl*, by Walter Manthorpe; and *Overspill*, by Elizabeth Denby.

The book consists in essence of three sections. The first of them might be called: "how to see your surroundings, and how to do something about it when you don't like what you see." It starts with "A Visual ABC": first, decide what your environment is and what it ought to look like—wild, country, "arcadia" (i.e., garden suburb in the strictest meaning of the term), town, or metropolis. Second, tidy it up and eliminate superfluous vertical elements. Third, use space to the best advantage, so there aren't bits left over serving no useful purpose. Fourth and finally, camouflage whatever visual offenses you can't get rid of.

"A Visual ABC" is followed by a "Casebook", which provides a series of illustrations of what various things ought (and ought not) to look like in each of the five types of setting. "Casebook" deals in turn with the general character of the five and with specific types of object—trees, walls, street furniture, roads—as well as with such "special problems" as industry, advertising, and street lighting.

This first part of **COUNTER-ATTACK** deals exclusively with things seen, and on the whole it does it very well. Its lesson is simple and based on a single premise: that the wild should be wild, the country rural, the town urban; that there is no place for rustic benches in the heart of a metropolis or for billboards in the countryside. (There is a place in **COUNTER-ATTACK**'s scheme of things for "Arcadia"—town with rural attributes—but none for "subtopia" or "sprawl" which is neither town nor country and merely combines the worst of both worlds.) Once you have decided what you are dealing with, you can then give it the visual treatment suited to it, so that one can really move from town to country and not just from concentrated subtopia to subtopia spread thin.

The limitations, both philosophical and practical, of this neat five-fold categorisation of the human habitat, are too obvious to require comment. Clearly, its usefulness does not cover a very wide range of application. But as a pragmatic approach to the practical problem of dealing with the aesthetics of environment, the idea

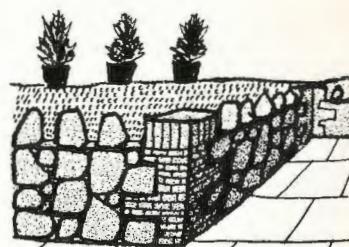
ought to be both usable and effective; and its application, *mutatis mutandis*, is by no means confined to Britain. For anyone concerned with the appearance of his community, whether hamlet or metropolis, "A Visual ABC" and "Casebook" should be invaluable handbooks, simply because they deal with the subject in terms of simple and straightforward rules of thumb instead of esoteric principles of design.

In the second part of **COUNTER-ATTACK**, Mr. Manthorpe and Miss Denby deal with the official contributions to subtopia: population density standards, minimum street widths, building by-laws, "overspill" policy and the like. They produce an interesting, if not methodologically watertight, analysis of the effects of official policies, particularly the prevention of any possibility of tight urban design and in making inevitable the continued slow spread of the low-density development that is neither town nor country.

This part of the book in particular has been vigorously attacked; and indeed it appears rather susceptible to attack, for the ways in which its conclusions are reached are not always beyond question. For example, the criticism of overspill policy—the decanting of population from large cities and conurbations to small or medium towns, New or otherwise—is based to a considerable extent on the *overall* population densities of the decanting areas: the sort of misleading statistical yardstick which elsewhere in the book is quite rightly condemned as having little meaning in relation to the practical realities of planning.

This sort of thing is unfortunate, but does not greatly weaken the case as a whole. Detailed criticism of data selec-

## walls and hedges

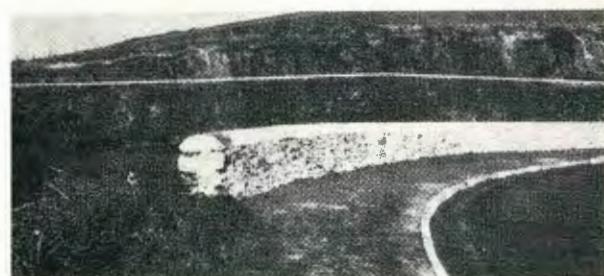


Caution: not rustic

From **COUNTER-ATTACK**

*"Everything to do with a trunk road must be big, legible, comprehensible at a glance and horizontal."*

*"Whitewashed stone from the Isle of Man . . . The trim is flowing with the road and river."*





BARNESLEY, GLOS. "Here is a village which has made itself into one of the most memorable places in Britain, simply by doing everything in a country way and by resisting all efforts to import alien elements. Yet there are no set-pieces, no outstanding buildings or features. It is just an ordinary village on an ordinary A-class road, a situation similar to hundreds of others. They could all be as genuine and as compact as this."

tion and methodology is not difficult but would be largely irrelevant, merely indicating an inability, or lack of desire, to see the wood for the trees; the wood in this case being the simple but vital fact that the control of design, layout and development generally by means of fixed and frequently arbitrary arithmetical standards is not planning. It is, in fact, merely a rather poor substitute for planning, and unquestionably inimical to good planning. A maze of regulations, by-laws, indices, standards, maxima and minima may help to avoid the worst consequences of *unplanned* development; they are also apt to be the most effective way of frustrating a skilful and conscientious technician with a planning job to do.

These two chapters are, in fact, a plea for the planner to be allowed to plan; a plea for the abolition of the frequently obsolete rules and regulations which furnish some who are called planners with a substitute for thought and ability while hamstringing those who know their job and want to get on with it. It is a pity that a plea basically so sound is not always entirely clear or convincing in argument.

The third part, "A Plan for Planning", follows on naturally from the second, dealing with the reform of plan-

ning primarily from the governmental and administrative end. Again, one's eyebrows may tend to rise slightly here and there. Picturesque phrasing does not altogether disguise a tendency to gloss over some of the facts of political and economic life and the problems which they involve. But again a strong central argument emerges clearly: that there can be no sound comprehensive planning (as opposed to individual development projects) in the absence of an overall national—or, translated into Canadian terms, regional—plan; that the elimination of chaos at the local level by means of 148 local plans (if even that is achieved) only transfers the chaos to the national level, which in turn comes full circle and makes impossible any real solution of local problems. In other words, it simply is not possible to treat a single segment of a political, economic and social entity as if it were an island entire unto itself.

Summing up: there is justification in COUNTER-ATTACK for feeling that the ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW is not at its best when it strays into non-architectural, or at any rate non-visual, topics. Besides introducing a good deal of material which is not strictly relevant to its theme, it exhibits an unmistakable tendency to sacrifice strict accuracy and scientific objectivity to force of impact. This is a pity, because it lays some sound and significant conclusions open to criticism to an unnecessary extent and thereby enables its opponents to sit back too easily self-satisfied and self-justified. But the strictly accurate and scientifically objective alternative suffers from a still greater practical defect—that few people are ever likely to read it. This is obviously not to be the fate of either OUTRAGE or COUNTER-ATTACK. They will be read and they should be read; for, whatever their faults, between them they say some very important things, and say them, on the whole, in a way that can be understood.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.

NIGEL H. RICHARDSON

Mr. Richardson was born in Bermuda. He received his advanced education at McGill University (B.A. 1951; M.A. in sociology and planning, 1954) and at Liverpool University (Diploma in Civic Design, 1955). He is now on the staff of the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board of B.C.

OLD HATFIELD. "Waste the space and the town will never get any better than this."

## Landscape: "our workshop, our playground and our environment"

**Tomorrow's Landscape**, by Sylvia Crowe. The Architectural Press, London, 1956. 207 pages. 68 illustrations. 21s.

Miss Crowe has written a very concise and informative book which can be recommended to planners and laymen alike. As the author states in her foreword, this book "does not pretend to give a blue-print for a future landscape", but it does carefully analyse the various types of landscape and suggest how they may be adapted for present day use. Written in non-technical language, it is very easy to follow.

A word of warning should be addressed to Canadian readers. This book is primarily about British landscapes and, though many of the principles which Miss Crowe expounds are of universal application, one must be wary of pitfalls in following exactly similar methods on this side of the Atlantic. The most obvious thing in this connection, of course, is that the plant species suggested in the book are not necessarily suitable to Canada's wide range of soils and climates.

It is even more important to appreciate the difference between the scale of the Canadian landscape and that of Britain. The mountains of Scotland, Wales and the English Lake District are rarely more than 3000 feet high and yet their grandeur frequently approaches that of the Rockies. Similarly the rolling English countryside, with its very intimate quality, has the curious knack of seeming much more extensive than it really is. It is nevertheless a small-scale landscape. Some areas of Canada are similar in scale, but for the most part we are dealing with great stretches of slightly undulating shield country, the endless prairie with its vast dome of sky and the splendours of the Rocky Mountains. Vastness is the keynote here.

We may now examine Miss Crowe's argument as she unfolds it. There are, she tells us, four basic types of landscape which vary according to the degree to which man dominates his environment. They are "the wild landscape", where nature is indisputably dominant; "the rural landscape" where man and nature work together; "the suburban landscape" where urban activities intrude into the countryside; and "the urban landscape" where nature is used to enhance the architectural scene.

One chapter is devoted to each of these categories, but they are preceded by a very useful chapter on "Landscape Survey". Here we are introduced to the physical factors which influence landscapes such as geology, climate, topography, vulnerability of plants and water supply as well as to existing use and character. The value of this chapter lies in the way in which Miss Crowe points out the relationship of these factors to the intended use of land. A special point is made of the difficulties to be met when large numbers of people use the land. Soil, frequency of rain or lack of it and the period during which the ground is covered by snow all influence the amount of pedestrian traffic which grass can bear. This is fairly obvious, but the effects of a drainage scheme which lowers the water table may be less so. Changes of vegetation may take place as a result, a fact well recognized in the Stockholm housing schemes, where the original coniferous trees are being replaced by birches which require less water.



*"In Copenhagen, the material from the foundations of point blocks has been used to build a great amphitheatre in scale with the buildings."*

From *Sylvia Crowe: TOMORROW'S LANDSCAPE*

In the chapter on "The Open Country" great care is urged in the landscaping of dams, reservoirs, quarries, afforestation schemes and tourist facilities so as not to destroy the essential character of the surroundings. The insensitive march of hydro pylons across places where they can ruin splendid views are strongly attacked. The evils of careless design are illustrated in the numerous photographs arranged as "before and after" sequences.

"The Farmlands" are "primarily the workshop of agriculture", but there is no reason why there should not be added a touch of beauty to make farmland into something more than a food production line. Miss Crowe not only makes this assertion, but she goes on to show how this touch of beauty can often be added in a very practical way, such as the use of shelter belts of trees. The landscaping of roads is also dealt with in this chapter.

"The Townsman's Country" tackles the problem of the city's impact on the countryside and is in many ways the most interesting chapter in the book. The term "suburban" is given a different connotation from the usual one and refers to things like tourist facilities and power stations, which are so frequently found outside the city but are nevertheless urban.

In suggesting how to handle monsters like gasometers and cooling towers, Miss Crowe is probably a little ahead of her time in this country. Gasometers are not very common in Canada (though there is a huge one in Montreal) and may never become so, but cooling towers for solid fuel power stations, which have already made their appearance in North America, may well become common here as water power reserves are exhausted. The production of nuclear energy will also bring strange new shapes.

Miss Crowe has much advice on how to deal with holiday crowds in trailer camps and in riverside and seaside areas. Much thought has gone into some of these problems in

North America, frequently with successful results, but more attention to detail of the type which this book suggests would be helpful.

The chapter on "Landscape in the Town" makes a plea for the planner to consider the local pattern of living when considering the type and quantity of open space in the city. Many of the questions implied in this chapter are ones which can only be answered by people on the spot, dealing with specific problems. As usual, Miss Crowe has a variety of solutions to suggest once the problem has been defined.

Though there is probably little in this book with which the landscape architect is not familiar, it does present in a very acceptable form many matters about which both the planner and the layman ought to be informed. In this lies its great value.

TORONTO

G. R. D. FRYER

*Mr. Fryer is Assistant Planner for the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board. He is a graduate architect from Birmingham University and has a Diploma from the School of Planning and Research for Regional Development, London.*

### Land Use Study

**Land Use in American Cities**, by Harland Bartholomew. S. J. Reginald Saunders and Co., Limited, Toronto. 1956. 141 pages. \$8.50.

This book is an extremely erudite and valuable contribution for the student and professional planner engaged in land use studies. There is an increasing need for sound factual information of this nature as a basis for further detailed planning studies. Land use statistics are only of value when used on a comparative basis. The similarities, differences and norms can therefore be evaluated either for a city or for a particular use. This is just what Mr. Bartholomew does for fifty-three central cities, thirty-three satellite communities and eleven complete urban areas. Anyone who has had the job of zoning (which is a legal tool for implementing a Master Plan) will find this book invaluable.

It is standard practice in North America to classify residential land uses under the headings: single-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings. I cannot therefore legitimately criticize the author for adopting it, but it has always seemed to me an unfortunate choice, and I fervently hope that all the residential sections of cities will not be planned or zoned in that way.

Mr. Bartholomew presents his information in very readable form. All cities have been grouped by size as well as by the three basic types mentioned. Each land use is discussed in detail and the appendices contain a list of the cities, the year of the survey and a detailed classification as used by the author's office. Thus the method of survey is almost as valuable a contribution as the extensive factual data presented.

The numerous tables and graphs are very clear, but the plans are so reduced that nothing more than a good impression can be obtained.

Residential and commercial land uses are shown to have fairly constant ratios to the size of population, as also does the total developed area. Valuable as this information is,

I cannot be persuaded that such empirical standards can be considered the ideal basis for future long-term planning proposals.

In the final chapter—*Conclusions and Applications*—examples are given of existing land uses, existing zoning and proposed zoning. Here Mr. Bartholomew has come dangerously near to presenting zoning analysis as planning! Perhaps he may be forgiven, since it might be claimed that other planning studies do not legitimately come under the title of *Land Uses in American Cities*.

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND

R. W. BALSTON

*Mr. Balston was trained as an architect at the Architectural Association School in London and also studied planning in England. He has been working in Newfoundland for the past three years and is the present City Planning Officer for St. John's.*

### Shopping Centres: Emerging Patterns

**Shopping Centers Re-Studied. Part I. Emerging Patterns.** Compiled and written by J. Ross McKeever. Technical Bulletin No. 30. Urban Land Institute, Washington, D.C. 1957. US\$5.

**EDITOR'S NOTE.** *Part II of this Bulletin, entitled PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES, has just been published. It may be reviewed in a later issue.*

To the average real estate speculator, the shopping centre has a far greater attraction than it merits. In nearly every large development, a site is earmarked for a shopping centre. But, for every ten sites earmarked, one is developed commercially; and for every two centres developed, one centre may eventually turn out to be complete and economically successful. Wishful thinking, over-optimism and a lack of adequate research are the paramount causes for this low rate of success.

This parlous state of affairs is of vital interest to every community. Yet what community is equipped to judge the effect of a proposed shopping centre within its bounds. One might go even further and ask how many community planners are equipped to assess the social and economic impact of a shopping centre in any one locality. The species is a new one; such things did not exist in Canada before 1947 and scarcely came to fruition before 1953. How then can we judge them? What can we know of them?

In our quest for information we will invariably finish south of the border at one of two sources: the one being the publications of the Eno Foundation for Highway Traffic Control, Saugatuck, Connecticut; the other, less scientific but possibly more useful, the publications of the Urban Land Institute. The latter institution claims amongst its members more shopping centre developers, agents and owners than any other similar organization and since 1945 has published some six technical bulletins and thirteen study articles on this subject, mainly from the developer's point of view, in addition to its *COMMUNITY BUILDERS HANDBOOK*, a large part of which is devoted to the shopping centre.

TECHNICAL BULLETIN No. 30, prepared by J. Ross McKeever, Assistant Director of the Institute, is intended to be a re-evaluation of the problem, bringing the series up to date.



BON AIR SHOPPING CENTRE, Greenbrae, San Raphael, California, a development by Bon Air Development Company. "Landscaping . . . a factor in pleasant shopping atmosphere . . ." Photograph from SHOPPING CENTERS RE-STUDIED

Part I is divided into six parts, the first three of which, ambiguously labelled *Introduction*, *Preliminaries* and *Planning*, are of direct concern to the planner. The remainder is concerned with the details of design, financing and operation.

The study commences with definitions of the terms "neighbourhood", "community" and "regional shopping centre" which have little to do with their sociological or geographical meanings; and the desired locational features of centres are discussed from the developers' point of view, which, surprisingly enough, debunks the current notions of the excellence of locating adjacent to a major cloverleaf junction (Toronto please note). The second section puts forward the well-worn theories on the rise of the shopping centre and makes pleasant reading for any developer, although containing some wise cautionary remarks. The ever-expanding American middle class and its suburban habitat, its motor cars and the general North American dislike of walking are stated (in other terms) to be the *raison d'être* of our phenomenon, and its lusty growth is seen to be a threat, albeit maybe a tonic, to the existing downtown commercial area. The even greater possible threat, economically and socially, to the suburbs themselves is not mentioned. This threat to the suburbs would not be serious if the centre were properly related to the community rather than to the

developer, economically and physically. What is pointed out, however, is that a centre with adjacent "walk in" custom is at an advantage compared to the more opportunist types so often found adjacent to highways and without any immediate customer support other than that on four wheels.

When it comes to the downtown area the study has some very pointed remarks to make. The downtown area, it says, should be a "glorified shopping centre". Owners should get together and indulge in some facelifting and joint parking schemes. The first section concludes with an apposite question which may very well be underlined, coming as it does from the developers themselves: "Are there too many shopping centres"? When one looks at what is happening in the suburbs of Toronto, one may well reply "yes".

The Bulletin wisely encourages proper examination of trade areas before embarking on a shopping centre project and explains, in the first half of the section entitled *Planning*, why and how this should be done. Some of the results from a 1955 consumer questionnaire study are given, all of which merely confirm one's suspicions that most shoppers are women, that downtown shops have greater selection, cheaper goods and inadequate parking. Again it is pointed out that overlapping of trade drainage areas should be avoided at all costs; and market analysis is discussed at length as the vital method for making decisions as to whether or not a

shopping centre is needed—not, as is often the case, as the method of justifying some doubtful assumptions of future success. After a study of site considerations, again from the viewpoint of the developer rather than the community, a plea is made for the sharing of the cost of some on-site utilities with the municipality, and for favourable zoning regulations. The latter at least is indeed a matter to which local authorities should pay attention, for their own good as well as the developer's. Municipalities, especially those on the fringes of metropolitan areas where most developments are likely to take place, cannot afford to imitate the ostrich when such major facilities as shopping centres are installed. They should be making their own market analyses and site investigations since a shopping centre is as much *their* investment, *their* responsibility, as it is the developer's. They must face the challenge or suffer from poor commercial facilities unsuited to their needs and harmful to nearby residential areas.

After these general planning considerations, the study passes on to details of building shape and size, which are of doubtful value other than that measurable in dollars and cents.

The notes on the selection of tenants should be taken to heart by some Canadian promoters who insist almost entirely on chain stores in their centres; for here lies the socio-economic problem of the partial exclusion of the smaller retailer from the suburban area due to the arrival of the shopping centre before he can have a chance to become established. Leasing of all stores prior to the commence-

ment of construction is mentioned as an essential. On glancing at some Canadian centres, one wishes this were compulsory legally, so that we might be spared the sight of half-completed, half-occupied buildings surrounded by a sea of unoccupied asphalt. Parking lots, the calculation of their size and dollar sales value are thoroughly discussed and diagrams shown; but the problem of how to make a shopping centre parking lot look less desert-like is not discussed.

The section labelled *Architectural Design* is more concerned with air-conditioning than architecture, and matters not having a direct effect on the cash register tallies are passed over lightly, with the one notable exception of the question of the control of signs. There is a reaction afoot against the neon sign which is somewhat unjustified; for is it not conceivable that there can be well-designed neon signs? Need we pass directly from barbarism to austerity?

Mr. McKeever's chapters on leasing and financing, while of no direct consequence to planners, are valuable to study if one wishes to know the real nature of the twentieth century North American shopping centre, the clue to the whole being the rental system which consists invariably of a rent based on a percentage of profits with an agreed minimum. This section terminates with the problem of taxation and yet another plea for a realistic municipal attitude towards the shopping centre.

MONTREAL

JOHN LEANING

*Mr. Leaning, a graduate in architecture of Liverpool University, is practising in Montreal. He is co-author of the article on THE QUEBEC VILLAGE in our last issue.*



NIGHT OPENING. *Shoppers Park—Westmount, a regional centre in Edmonton, owned and operated by Shoppers Park Westmount, Limited.*

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Membership dues, which include payments for the four issues of the *Review* and the *Community Planning News* (at least six issues yearly), are only \$3.

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